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## THE CLOUDS\*

(*A play in three acts*)

BY JAROSLAV KVAPIL

*Translated from the Bohemian by Charles Recht\**

### THE CAST

PATER IAN MATOUSH, a village priest.

MAYA ZEMANOVA, an actress.

PETR KOCIAN, a theological student.

MARIA KOCIANOVA, his mother, the priest's sister.

DR. VOTAVA, a physician.

*Scene:* A small Bohemian parsonage near the mountains.

### ACT I

*Courtyard of a country parsonage. Summer afternoon.*

Matoush (*entering from the outside with his sister*).—Well, God willing, by to-morrow night this year's harvest will be all gathered. To-morrow we'll get that piece we have on Zablati finished up, and then we'll thresh it all together. But don't you work so hard, Marianka. To-day it was awfully hot, and you, poor thing, had to work twice as hard. Petr home?

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*Kocianova.*—No. Soon after dinner he took a book and went somewhere around Zalachi.

*Matoush.*—My old feet don't serve me as well as they used to. I went around to Zablati and it took me a good hour to get home. And I am tired. In other days I would go with the last sacrament a good many miles and would come home as fresh as when I started, but now even such a short walk wearies me. We are getting old, Marianka; we are getting old. And we stand here all alone.

*Kocianova.*—May the Almighty at least reward us with Petr. May He give him His mercy and blessing so he can serve his first mass next year.

*Matoush* (smiling).—And afterwards that he should go a-farming on some godforsaken country parsonage. Is that it? (*Sits down on the bench.*)

*Kocianova.*—God's will be done. Our old father farmed, my old man farmed,—and both were content.

*Matoush.*—Listen Marianka—come, stop a moment—come sit down here beside me. Listen, are you not at least once in a while a bit sorry that Petr is not going to be something greater, something more important than his uncle? And you know well that he could have been.

*Kocianova.*—But I have promised him to the Lord. And He knows the covenant I made with Him when the boy was on his deathbed, and that's why He saved him.

*Matoush.*—And do you think that is the only reason why He saved him?

*Kocianova.*—For that and everything. But it was His will that Petr should be what you are.

*Matoush.*—What I am! Ah! my golden soul, at our age one can regret many things and yearn for things which are not. I go through fields, I meet the peasants and laborers, and I often ask of myself, "For this did I study many long years, for this did my brothers and sisters sacrifice themselves, for this did I remain single, that at the end of ends I should be the same as you are, but without your happiness and your hope?" What I am! A peasant, a strange acre, which to-day is mine and to-morrow is—God knows whose. A decaying recluse who never knew the world and who doesn't leave anything to the world.

*Kocianova.*—Don't lament, Jenichek! You brought up Petr.

*Matoush.*—No, I didn't. He would have finished his studies

without me, and without me he would have been what you would have "covenanted" him to be. Marianka, God is also in other places besides the church. And when I see Petr and his habitual silence, his compressed lips, it is to me as if I saw our poor dead father again, at that time when I told him I would go to the seminary if we didn't have enough money for the university (*waving his hand*). Well, I went gladly. I offered myself as a sacrifice, and went of my own will, Marianka, of my own accord.

*Kocianova.*—And Petr also —

*Matoush.*—Petr, my dear, has been sacrificed by you, or rather let us say, we have sacrificed him. He could have studied, I could have afforded it. (*Silence.*)

*Kocianova.*—It was God's will.

*Matoush.*—It was your wish, Marianka, it was the wish of your religion (*smoothing her hair lightly*). You have a good son, sister. May God preserve him, and the Lord's will be done. (*Rising.*) Won't you give me my lunch?

*Kocianova (rising).*—See, we were talking till I forgot. (*Seeing Petr coming.*) And there is Petr coming; you can eat together.

*Petr (entering from the outside).*—His name be praised!

*Matoush.*—Unto all eternity!

*Kocianova.*—From ages to ages!

*Matoush.*—You are hurrying home, too, aren't you? Such heat tires me.

*Petr.*—In the Zalchi woods it is nice and shady, and pleasant to read there.

*Matoush.*—Yes, on Zalchi, of course,—but what a distance?

*Kocianova.*—Do you still remember, Petrichek, how you got lost on Zalchi when you went to pick strawberries? Good God, but that's so many years ago!

*Petr (smiling).*—At least twenty.

*Kocianova.*—If not more, my dear boy. Why you were only such a bit of a schoolboy; but even at that time your dear father was already with God.

*Matoush.*—It will be twenty-four years on Saint Vaclav's day since he died.

*Kocianova.*—Twenty-four already. How the years go! And how old are you, Petrichek?

*Petr.*—Almost twenty-eight.

*Matoush.*—To be sure, to be sure. You were almost fourteen

when we sent you to the gymnasium.

*Kovianova.*— And then you lost two years on account of that sickness.

*Matoush.*— What happened that time on Zalchi? I don't recollect —

*Petr (with a smile).*— Well, at that time! — with that little girl from Prague, — don't you remember?

*Matoush.*— Ach, with the one whose father restored our church?

*Kocianova.*— Yes, yes, with her. And wasn't she great friends with our little Petr? The girl was only a little tot, but such a good child. I can see her even now. On her little neck she had a string of little red corals, and Frank Dolegsh teased her whenever he saw her, "Give me those pretty corals, Marenka." Marenka she was called, wasn't she?

*Petr.*— Yes, Marenka, I think.

*Kocianova.*— Well, and one fine day just as the boy was teasing her again, the girl says something sharp to him, and then dear Frank, — bang! goes and tears down the whole string from her neck. The corals were scattered all over the ground, and the girl was like wild. Our Petrik was sitting here on the doorstep — just as if I would see him to-day — and just as the girl started to cry, he flew at Frank, and soon he was on top of him (*laughing*). You used to be such a wild fellow, Petrichek.

*Petr (quietly).*— I used to be, maminka, I used to be.

*Matoush (laughing).*— Oh yes, I also remember it now. And afterward they had to pick up all those corals, and finally I punished them both.

*Petr.*— What became of that girl, I wonder?

*Matoush.*— She lost her father so suddenly. It is a great pity. He was such a good and skilful man; at that time he fixed up our church so well that it has no equal, far or near.

*Kocianova.*— Oh, well, I suppose she has been married a long time now. Why, she was only a few days younger than our Petr.

*Petr.*— Yes, they used to tease me by calling me her bridegroom. Frank, even after many years, used to shout, "Where is your wife Marenka?"

*Kocianova.*— Ah, what do the children not chatter together!

*Petr.*— And what life makes of it! (*Silence.*)

*Matoush.*— Oh, it was at that time on Zalchi that you and she lost your way. Now I am recollecting. What trouble there was here

in the house when you weren't home after the Angelus.

*Petr.*—Talk about the Angelus! Why, it was perfectly dark when the Herstein forester found us in the woods and brought us home.

*Kocianova.*—And here am I listening to you and forgetting all about the lunch (*Going out*). Shall I bring it into the hall?

*Matoush.*—Yes, do, Marianka, do, it's nice and cool there.

*Kocianova.*—I will get it ready at once (*exit*).

*Matoush (after a while).*—See, Petr, how the time flies. It isn't such a long time ago since you came back on a vacation, and soon it will be after harvesting, and then you'll have to get ready to go back to the seminary again.

*Petr.*—God willing, a year from to-day I will serve my first mass.

*Matoush.*—Yes, and next year after the harvest you will settle down some place as a pastor. Your mother would like to see it even now.

*Petr.*—Poor maminka.

*Matoush.*—My poor mother cried for me when I served my first mass, but not from joy. She wanted me to be a doctor. But there wasn't enough money for that. And see, Petr, I have been consecrated for thirty-two years, and this is the twenty-sixth year that I have been in this lonely farm. Why, why, I am almost sixty (*pause*). Do you still remember, Petr, how we sat here, just as to-day, under this tree, at the time when you were about to enter the Seminary? How many times, my dear boy, have I thought of it since. Didn't I myself, years ago, dislike to go where I was sending you? And I went voluntarily at that. When we sat down in the buggy at that time, and I took you to the railway station, I felt just as if I were leaving my home again to go to some place where I really did not want to go. But I had to go and see you; you, too, probably had to go. (*After a while.*) But, see here, Petr, I should not talk to you in this way. I am a priest and you too will become one soon; and perhaps I ought to pray for the constant and undisturbed peace of your soul. But we are men now; grown-up men, and they say that men are the masters of their fates. Tell me, my boy—are you content? And do you hope to be always content?

*Petr (quietly).*—Always, uncle.

*Matoush.*—God forbid that I should try to misguide you now when you stand at the threshold of a new career, which has been the lifelong wish and dream of your mother and which has become your own ambition also. But I am an old man, Petr, and to us old people

and especially to those who during their lives have always had enough time to meditate about themselves — is given as a recompense for their inactive past, an insight as clear as of summer nights when the most distant things are in view. I was never a religious fanatic, although even if I had taken up a different calling I would have never ceased to be a believer. To your mother I do not dare to talk about these things at all. She considers priests as the incarnation of religious belief — because she never heard [of] anything else. To her we are the living embodiment of faith, the assurance of the nearness of her God. But, believe me, He exists even without us and our preaching. (*Pause.*) You are surprised, Petr, isn't it so, that a priest should talk in this way? I, your former instructor, your guardian, the very priest whose hand led you into the service of the Church.

*Petr.*— Frankly, uncle, while I listen to you I feel the strangeness of your talk. But it seems to me that I understand you well — at least, it seems so to me. I comprehend your situation more through feeling than reason. Indeed, my reason has not been given the opportunity to pursue an independent path of its own liking — but had to follow the clerical path. I see now that in the Church it is very much as it is in the Army. Those who enter must leave reason and independence behind them. You are not to think — but to believe. Believe me, I would have perhaps rebelled against my mother's commands had it not been for you and for the example you have set. Your loyalty in everything, in work, in the love of your kindred amidst this graveyard solitude of a country parsonage, gave me confidence that I also would be able to fulfil my mother's wish — and that I will be strong enough to kill all bolder hopes and dreams of young ambition.

*Matoush.*— You are a good boy, Petr, and I would even say that you are a worthy man, were it not that I myself wish often that men would and should be stronger than we both are. May God strengthen and protect you. (*Patting him lightly.*) And don't blame your old uncle, my dear fellow, if he talked to you as a priest ought not talk. (*Gets up.*) But let's come, come — maminka has most likely just as much as we forgot about the meal. (*Goes a few steps and calls out.*) Well, Marianka, aren't you going to invite us in?

*Kocanova (on the threshold).*— Please have patience. In a minute. The girl ran away on me somewhere and I had to chop a bit of wood myself. But come inside, it will soon be ready. (*Goes into the*

yard.) Where could that Barushka be —

*Matoush.*— Let's come, Petr. (Smiling.) *Nunc est bibendum.*  
(They both go into the house.)

*Kocianova (in the yard).*— But what a girl she is — (*Crosses the yard.*) Barushka! (Goes out through the gate.) Barushka,— can you hear me?

(The stage remains empty for a while. *MAYA appears in the gateway.* She is lightly dressed and carries a parasol which she shuts when she enters. She looks around meditatively.)

*Kocianova (whose voice can be heard from a nearby house).*— But Barushka, Barushka — where have you been?

*Petr (comes out on the threshold and calls).*— Maminka, maminka, where did you put —? (Having seen *MAYA* he does not finish the sentence, but stops and greets her quietly.) Good afternoon.

*Maya.*— Ach! Pardon me, reverend sir, that I have come into your yard without permission.

*Petr.*— You are welcome. Are you looking for somebody?

*Maya.*— Oh no — mere inquisitiveness. I just wanted to see your parsonage from the outside, at least. Old memories, don't you know. Would you permit me to look into the hall. There used to be some old blackened pictures there and I used to be so afraid of them.

*Petr (steps off the threshold — he motions to her to enter).*— If you please!

*Maya (approaches the threshold, but stops).*— Ach! Pardon. I must explain why I am interested. My name is Maya Zemanova and I come from Prague.

*Petr (somewhat embarrassed).*— Yes —

*Maya.*— I used to live here — many, many years ago. And this year some vagabond spirit brought me again into your neighborhood. I am in Breskowitz for my vacation. (She looks around.) Wonderful! To my imagination your parsonage seemed a tremendous building, your yard according to my recollection was at least as big as a town square, even that tree there seems to me very much smaller than it was in my memory — and the tree must have grown since that time.

*Petr.*— You must have been away from here for a long time, madam.

*Maya (laughing).*— Years, many years. But, reverend sir, you were not here then.

Petr.— Impossible, madam, I was born here.

Maya.— You don't tell me — but then you did not say Mass.

Petr.— I don't say it, even now, madam. I have not yet been ordained.

Maya.— Is that so? I thought that you were the local pastor.

Petr.— Oh, no — I am only a theological student.

Maya.— Ach. So. You are only a bachelor, only, ha? (Laughing.)

Petr (smiles).— Yes, only a bachelor, dear madam.

Maya (laughing).— Well, then, I am not a madam, as yet either.

Petr (embarrassed).— Pardon me, Miss.

Maya (still jolly).— Who can help it that I look like a married lady. (After awhile.) And if you please, Mr. — Mr. — see, now I don't know what title to give you. May I not call you "reverend sir"?

Petr.— My name is Kocian, Miss.

Maya (lightly).— Delighted. Is not that priest here any more, who used to be here years ago? I have such a bad memory for names.

Petr.— My uncle has served in this place for almost twenty-six years.

Maya (with warmth).— Your uncle?

Petr.— Yes, Pater Ian Matoush.

Maya.— Yes! Yes! Father Matoush. But, God in heaven, is your name Petr?

Petr (surprised).— Really, Miss, Petr is my name.

Maya.— Petr! Petr! (Shakes his hand cordially.) And did you not recognize me?

Petr (embarrassed).— You — Miss?

Maya.— Not even by my name? Ah, of course, the name I gave you is of later date. That is my stage name. You know I am an actress.

Petr (involuntarily releases her hand).— Is that so?

Maya (laughing).— But did not you get frightened! (More seriously.) My real name is Marie Preisova — but I am entirely used to the other name.

Petr (suddenly remembering).— Marie Preisova. (Quickly.) Your father worked on our church, here, did he not?

Maya (cordially).— And during that time I was the ward of the

parsonage, surely, surely. My mother was already dead and papa took me with him every vacation.

*Petr.*— Ach! Miss Preisova — this is, indeed, strange. We were just talking about you.

*Maya.*— You — about me? Why, do you still remember me? And with whom were you talking about me, please?

*Petr.*— Why, with uncle and maminka.

*Maya.*— Is maminka still alive? She is the priest's sister, is she not?

*Petr.*— Yes, she has been keeping house for my uncle since my father's death.

*Maya.*— What a surprise, Mr. Petr, I daresay. You are not angry at me for calling you by your first name?

*Petr.*— Ah. If you please — Miss —

*Maya* (*suddenly, surprised*).— And you are also a priest — or you are going to be one! Who would have thought that of you? I always remembered you with that big paper cap on your head and your long wooden sabre — who could have known that from such a courageous hero the after years would hatch out a colorless country parson?

*Petr* (*somewhat astonished; then he says slowly and quietly*).— It had to be!

*Maya* (*seriously*).— It had to be! Ach, yes, Mr. Petr, everything had to be! (*Merrily.*) And how about me — did you ever think that I would become an actress?

*Petr* (*quiet smile*).— Rather a fairy princess, Miss, as you yourself used to tell me in those days.

*Maya.*— Yes, a fairy princess. Down below on a hedge near the brook we had our castle in a watchman's booth.

*Petr.*— Yes, and I used to go out, sabre in hand every time Frank Dolejsh would come to besiege our cherry trees.

*Maya.*— And once you walloped him on account of me, ha?

*Petr.*— Many times. Even after you went away from here Frank got many whippings on account of you.

*Maya.*— Is it possible! And why?

*Petr* (*embarrassed*).— Why — well why? But that is no longer true. (*Pause.*)

*Maya* (*pensively*).— “Gib meine Jugend mir zurück” . . . (*Quickly changing the subject.*) And maminka, is she well? And uncle, how is he?

Petr (*hurriedly, getting out of his embarrassment*).— The Lord be praised — they are both well. And won't they be glad! How stupid of me! Here I am talking with you without inviting you inside.

Maya (*smiles and remains standing on the threshold — she looks around*).—

Petr.— But I'll have to call maminka. (*Hurries through the yard.*) Maminka, maminka! (*Goes around the corner.*)

Maya (*steps inside the yard and looks about. She gazes at the stern, white walls of the rectory and looks at the tree, then goes back to the house and sits down on the bench. She begins to write on the sand with her parasol, reciting to herself half aloud.*)

Kocianova (*still behind the scenes*).— And what a visit. What a visit! (*Enters, followed by PETR*)— My dear, golden soul. What a guest, what a guest! (*Goes over to MAYA, who rises and goes toward her.*)

Maya.— Mrs. Kocianova, do you still remember me? (*She embraces and kisses her.*)

Kocianova.— Ach. My dear, golden Miss. You are no longer that little Marenka who used to romp around with our Petr. Such a lady from the city! I really don't know, Miss —

Maya.— And I used to think of all of you so often. Believe me, I often wanted to come here. Last year I was in Pilsen and I was all ready to make a trip over here, but just then I got a telegram to return to Prague and I had to go back.

Kocianova.— And during all this time you never wrote to us. My brother read at that time in the newspaper that your father was with God.

Maya.— Those were very sad times for me, Mrs. Kocianova. My father fell off a scaffolding when they were rebuilding a church in Skalitz, and when I got there he was already dead.

Kocianova.— My poor soul!

Maya.— And then I was not even fifteen. And soon after that my aunt who adopted me died, too, and since my seventeenth year I have been all alone in the world. I was in Germany for a couple of years, but this is now my sixth year in Prague.

Kocianova.— Well, as long as you are healthy and happy.

Maya.— Well, health I have, thank God — and as for happiness, I don't get enough time for that.

Petr.— Miss — is with the theater in Prague, maminka.

*Kocianova.*—Is that possible—that big one? And she plays parts there, does she not?

*Maya.*—It's funny, isn't it? And almost ten years now.

*Kocianova.*—That must be an odd calling. And don't you find it hard?

*Maya.*—That is how I make my living.

*Petr.*—That's why I could not recognize Miss —. She introduced herself by her stage name.

*Kocianova (confused).*—And has she a different name now than she had then?

*Maya.*—You see, Mrs. Kocianova, at first I did not want to play under my own name, because so many people knew my father, and now I am better used to the other name.

*Kocianova (surprised).*—Why, is that possible?

*Maya (lightly).*—Why not? To-day no one knows me by the old name.

*Petr.*—About such things we have no idea, maminka.

*Kocianova (quietly).*—We have not, to be sure. (*After a while.*) But you must come inside, Miss. Brother will be surprised, I tell you!

*Maya.*—Really, I hardly feel like leaving this yard. Why, we used to stay here from morning till night. Here on the threshold, there on the bench and there under the trees. Out into the hall I was almost afraid to go on account of those big black pictures.

*Kocianova.*—Could I offer you a glass of our cream?

*Maya.*—Your cream? If you please, Mrs. Kocianova. Poor father, for many years he used to say, "There is nothing like that cream from Luschitz."

*Kocianova.*—So come right inside, Miss, right inside. Go, Petrichek, and take the Miss inside, I'll go and get something.

*Maya (jolly).*—But wait, Mrs. Kocianova, I will go in alone. I'll appear before the pater in the same way that I appeared before Mr. Petr. I wonder if he will know me. (*Laughs.*) Do you know, Mrs. Kocianova, that Petr kept on calling me "madam," before he recognized me. Well, well—who is to blame that I am not married?

*Kocianova.*—The young lady is nothing but jolliness. Well, then, as you like. Brother is in the hall to the right. Do you remember the way?

*Maya (lightly).*—I wonder what I could say to him, so he would not know me. Well, I'll try to think of something. I will be out

in a minute, so please wait. (*Going inside.*) To the right, then —  
(*Goes in.*)

*Petr (confused; stands in the midst of the courtyard).*

*Kocianova (after a pause).*— Really, really — I cannot get it into my head. And that this should be that little Marenka Preisova from Prague. Petrichek —

*Petr (rousing).*— Yes, yes, but I have changed, too, maminka.

*Kocianova.*— You I have not lost from my sight, my dear boy, and so it does not seem so strange.

*Petr.*— And then I grew up differently.

*Kocianova.*— And how sincere and cordial she is! Would you believe that when I saw her the first time I really did not know what to say to her? But she came to me at once, with a "My dear Mrs. Kocianova," and kissed me just like my own child.

*Petr.*— She must have met with but little love in this world.

*Kocianova.*— Yes, the poor thing, since her fifteenth year without a mother or a father! And in her best years!

*Petr.*— And still she went independently through life. A little girl fighting life's battle unaided, single handed. Think of that, maminka! And in those years I was only a petty gymnasium student. And even to-day I am — nothing.

*Kocianova.*— But you soon will be, God willing —

*Petr.*— A forgotten country parson.

*Kocianova.*— Believe me, my boy, that is something even greater than her calling. Well, I don't know. Only if she is as good a girl as she seems. Surely, it is a gift from God that she attained to all these things — but I don't know what and how it is — I don't know yet.

*Petr.*— Without doubt it is something beautiful and great. See how free and unrestrained she is in her talk to us and her actions. Wonderful! When I was in the gymnasium I went to the theater now and then, and it seemed to me that these women were really not women at all, just as if some master created an ideal being and it was artistically placed upon the stage. One of the actresses lived near our house at the time when I lived with old Mrs. Morfeit. And she was a wonderful woman. I always thought that I would die of embarrassment if she should ever speak to me on the street. And that's the way I have always imagined all actresses were.

*Kocianova.*— I don't understand those things at all. One hears about it once in a while, but never knows about it. But when I look

at that girl there I begin to believe it. Only she must be better, more open hearted than the others — Well! I don't know how I should say it. When one hears a goodly creature like that one feels better and the world grows brighter.

*Petr.* — And what must the men of their world be if a woman can be so free and independent — how those men must live! Does it not seem to you, maminka, that they are entirely different people of a different world than ours? And that world is so far away.

*Kocianova (softly).* — Well, let it be far away. As long as we can love some one. If God wills it, neither are you living in vain. Did I not pray to Him for you?

*Petr (somewhat moved).* — And I also thank Him daily that I still have you. (*Cordially.*) Let His will be done, maminka, as long as you find joy in me.

*Kocianova (pats him lightly).* — My good, my only Petrichek.

*Petr (after a while).* — Well, I daresay that uncle was surprised when he saw her. I wonder if she has told him yet who she is.

*Maya (running out of the house).* — Well, you should have seen it! You should have seen it!

*Kocianova.* — Did brother know you, Miss?

*Maya.* — No, not at all. (*To the priest who is coming after her.*) He made so many guesses, did you not, — but never guessed right!

*Matoush.* — What do you think of that, Marianka? And you, *Petr*?

*Petr.* — I did not know Miss Preisova, either, uncle.

*Matoush.* — And do you know who I thought she was when she entered. The Countess of Herstein. I was reading without my glasses, when she knocked and came in. That figure and that light dress.

*Maya.* — And I of course played my little part and the reverend sir started off, "Your Grace." Only that as soon as he put on his glasses he saw —

*Matoush.* — But still I did not know where to place her —

*Maya.* — See, see, reverend sir. To-day you would hardly call me "you over-patted cry baby." Really, that's what he called me once when I began to whimper for no reason and he was in a hurry.

*Matoush.* — But I am afraid that it was a little worse than you tell us.

*Maya.* — Yes, it was. At the end I got a good slap from you because I would not stop.

*Kocianova (laughing loudly).*—Is that possible, Miss!

*Maya.*—And believe me, Mrs. Kocianova, for such a slap I would gladly go back into the days of my childhood, even to-day. My childhood was not very long, but beautiful.

*Petr.*—The present must be even more beautiful.

*Maya.*—That only seems so to you, as to many others. But you, Mr. Petr, you must have enjoyed your young years even more than I.

*Petr (slightly bitter).*—Do you think so, Miss?

*Kocianova.*—Ach, my dear, golden soul! Petr had a very sad childhood. Even at the time when he was home. Brother did not know for a long while whether he would send him to the city to study. He was already fourteen when brother decided, and then, the poor thing, he fell sick, and we had to have him home for a long, long while. And how many times did Dr. Votava come here?

*Matoush.*—Yes, he was almost a goner.

*Kocianova.*—And then I used to kneel and pray many, many nights and call upon God to save him. It was at that time that I promised him to the Lord — and He accepted my promise and He saved him.

*Maya (attentive, with interest).*—And at that time you decided what Mr. Petr should be?

*Kocianova.*—The Lord Himself decided.

*Maya (after a pause).*—None of us knows where Fate will take us, I never thought of going on the stage. I wanted to be a teacher. And besides, did you know that I was also in a convent?

*Kocianova (interested).*—Were you, Miss?

*Maya.*—It was really a girlish whim. After my father's death in all that loneliness and worry I longed for a quiet haven. In my seventeenth year I thought that my life was all spent and I had such a craving for solitude and peace. So I went to the Mother Abbess of Sacré Coeur.

*Kocianova.*—Well, and —

*Maya.*—And a half a year after that I was on the stage. I have no idea how it all happened! The convent did not quite come up to my expectations, and in the mean time one of my aunt's acquaintances met me and she was an amateur actress. For a year I played in German places — I knew German well, you know. My father used to send me to a German high school. So I played in Germany for some time, and as soon as I could I came back.

*Petr.*—And are you happy, Miss?

*Maya (lightly).*—Yes—happy. We are all happy as long as we have enough to do and enough to think about. But here am I talking about myself all the time. And how are you getting along, Father?

*Matoush.*—I? At my age thinking becomes an unnecessary function. I was farming already at the time when you were with us—and well the years passed by without much change. Only that we have grown much older, and Petr grew up. And after we have gone, he, too, will get old and so we will all pass away without leaving anybody or anything to this world, except three neglected poor-looking crosses in the churchyard.

*Kocianova.*—God's will be done!

*Matoush.*—But you are a nice hostess, Marianka. Aren't you going to offer something to Miss Preisova?

*Maya (laughing).*—We have forgotten all about that cream. But don't trouble yourself, Mrs. Kocianova. I will come again, if you will permit me.

*Kocianova.*—No trouble at all, Miss. When you come again, you can have some again, and every day if you like.

*Dr. Votava (coming from the outside).*—Hello there, everybody! And what do you think of this! Here is Miss Zemanova in the rectory. Extremes have met! (*Greeting every one.*)

*Maya.*—We are old friends, aren't we, reverend sir? And how about you, Doctor, have you a patient here?

*Votava.*—Not here in the parsonage. Mrs. Kocianova is about again as chipper as a bird. But old Rynesh down there in the village is getting along very badly. I am just coming from him. The old woman, poor thing, is wailing awfully. Would not you go over there, Father? I promised her that I would stop in here and ask you to come over with the Sacrament.

*Kocianova.*—So—so—it is true, after all. Well, he has been very miserable lately.

*Matoush.*—I will get ready at once, doctor. Petr, go and get the sexton. And you, Marianka, don't forget the young lady.

*Petr (going).*—I am going. I'll take a short cut through the garden. (*Goes out around the house.*)

*Matoush.*—Yes, and I'll follow you at once. Well, let's go. Shall I see you again, doctor?

*Votava.*—I don't know. I thought of giving Miss Zemanova a ride. My buggy is below at the inn.

*Maya.*— I really wanted to go by the fields.

*Votava.*— I would not advise you. You might get wet. The clouds are pretty darkly gathered above Zalchi.

*Kocianova.*— God forbid. Our people are still in the fields. But now I must — (*Goes into the house.*)

*Matoush.*— And you, doctor, will stay a while, will you not?

*Votava.*— I'll take a look around the village and come back here for Miss Zemanova.

*Matoush.*— Well, good by! (*Goes into the house.*)

*Votava.*— And how do you come to be here, Miss Zemanova?

*Maya.*— I used to be a guest here many years ago.

*Votava.*— Ach surely! My wife was telling me about it the other day. I forgot.

*Maya.*— No wonder. A busy, worried man like you!

*Votava.*— And don't you think that we have no worries! We in the villages are, as it were, isolated from the rest of the world, but we still have our worries.

*Maya.*— Listen, doctor, do you often come here to the rectory?

*Votava.*— Now and then. Whenever it is necessary. Every time I come to the village I always stop here to see the old man. He is one of those old-fashioned ones. One still can talk to such.

*Maya.*— Young Kocian is of the younger generation, I suppose?

*Votava.*— Well, at the present time he is not. That is — I don't know. On the whole, he is a poor talker. Perhaps his seminary life did not contribute much to his happiness.

*Maya (with interest).*— How is that?

*Votava.*— The boy used to be as wild as an Indian and then he got very seriously ill. He recovered and was a good student. I thought that he would become something else. But his mother was set upon the seminary — and the uncle, what could he do? He did not resist her wishes.

*Maya.*— And Petr?

*Votava.*— He humbly goes the usual path of our poor country students. That's the way it always ends with our farmer lads; either they haven't enough money for the university or it's the wish of their pious parents. Our peasants want all their sons to be gentlemen. Well, they manage to get them through the gymnasium somehow, but then — it's hard. The rank and file of our young clergy, even those who become religious fanatics later in life, is formed thus from involuntary candidates.

*Maya.*— Poor Petr!

*Votava.*— Why poor Petr? Maybe he is and maybe he isn't. That's an individual instance. After all, our attainments in life are only the sum total of our ambitions, so far as these could develop in our environment. It all depends on whether the individual is strong enough to change his surroundings, if he finds that they conflict with his ambitions.

*Maya.*— And what if such individual recognizes that fact later on in life? For instance, suppose that Petr should to-day awake and recognize that his mother's wishes are of no importance when compared to his duty to himself, his mission in life, his happiness? Suppose he should rise up? What then?

*Votava.*— What then? Perhaps only a misunderstanding, or maybe a calamity. My dear Miss Zemanova, it is not advisable to shake the foundations on which rest the newer layers of our life. Petr is to-day blindly going along on the well-beaten path — like a new chicken in a strange yard, whose wings are tied. If he should want to fly he will only fly into a neighboring yard and would injure himself in getting over the fence. And they would catch the chicken there, after all; and if tying the wings did not answer the purpose they'd cut them off entirely.

*Maya.*— Salutary theories!

*Votava.*— For us they are salutary — what do you know? You never had chicken wings.

(*Petr is returning from the outside.*)

*Votava.*— It is agreed then, Miss? I'll take you with me. I am just going to see another patient and I'll return in a few minutes. So, until then, by by! (*Goes out.*)

*Maya* (*crosses the yard and sits down on the bench near the house.*)— And how about you, Mr. Petr, aren't you ever going to Prague?

*Petr.*— When?

*Maya.*— Any time. Perhaps this vacation. Only wait until I return there. Take your mother along with you. Let your uncle keep house alone for a day or two.

*Petr.*— Ach. What do you think? Maminka — and to Prague!

*Maya.*— It is not at the world's end. Suppose you had studied there. She would have had to come there a couple of times.

*Petr* (*with a light smile.*)— If I had studied there! Ah, no, Miss — Prague means nothing to me any more. First of all, I must finish my last year, and then comes the holy Mass, and in the mean

time I must not think of anything else.

*Maya.*— You certainly are in a hurry to get there.

*Petr.*— Why shouldn't I be! Others at my age already have a career behind them.

*Maya.*— Will you be glad when you are ordained and are your own master?

*Petr.*— Well, I wish it were to-day.

*Maya* (*inquisitively*).— You took up theology gladly, did you not?

*Petr.*— Gladly? (*Just as if he did not know what to answer.*) Oh! yes, gladly, even if only for my mother's sake.

*Maya.*— Listen to me, don't you ever think of a greater career?

*Petr.*— How do you mean?

*Maya.*— Well, I don't know how you priests make a career. It is most likely the same as in other lines. A small country parish is not the end of your ambitions. What comes after a parson? a dean, ha? Or a vicar? (*Laughs.*)

*Petr* (*with a smile*).— Well, perhaps — a dean.

*Maya.*— Yes, and after a dean an archdean and then a bishop. And archbishop, cardinal (*laughs*). Well, would not that be a career?

*Petr.*— But, Miss, what are you thinking of? I never in my life have thought of being anything greater than a simple country parson. I have really never given it any thought at all.

*Maya.*— Aren't you ambitious?

*Petr* (*calmly*).— No.

*Maya.*— Peculiar! (*After a while.*) You know what I was thinking of. It seems to me that this calling of yours does not afford you happiness. I don't believe that it is not impossible to be ambitious in a labor of love. Look! not even I thought of being an actress. First I trifled with that idea, which later on became my existence. But as soon as I gave myself up to the theater I devoted myself to it with all my soul. Passionately. And still, look! I am not one of those egoists who consider an actor the crownpiece of society. On the contrary, the profession — do you understand me — not the art but the profession — is at times even repulsive to me. I look upon most of the people from the stage point of view. But nevertheless, I live with my entire soul in my art, I am lost therein, it is that which gives passion and pleasure to my life — without it I don't know whether I could exist.

*Petr.*— You are happy?

*Maya.*—Happy! Since my childhood I have not been entirely happy. Because happiness to me seems like a peaceful rest, calmness, conciliation with life. But my life is nothing but activity, effort, and struggle. I must always aspire further and higher, without a minute's rest, without stop. Instead of my passion for happiness, I have only my ambition; I find joy in work, joy in beauty, and I know how to become infatuated even with the joy of life. But happy, that which you call "happiness," happy I am not. And see, I often yearn for that happiness—like that happiness of my childhood; but not until to-day did I know that such happiness would be sufficient for me. I don't want it — although I know that it exists — only it does not exist for me.

*Petr* (*does not understand her clearly*).— You have lived so differently from me. I believe you, but I do not understand.

*Maya.*—That's because you never knew the charm of your calling. In the selfsame way you could have been a lawyer or a physician. You decided to become a priest because your mother wanted it. And in the same way that you believe me, but do not understand, so do I believe that you will gladly become a priest. You are, namely, happy because until now you have not aspired for anything different.

*Petr.*—Do you think so?

*Maya.*—Yes. Perhaps you never aspired for anything different because they separated you in time from everything. You look neither to the left nor to the right, and obediently go the commanded way. You go gladly, you say. But, Mr. Petr, did you ever feel joy on the way?

*Petr.*—My calling is not supposed to be a joyful one.

*Maya.*—Don't think that! Everywhere it is possible to feel joy, even in the most cruel and terrible things. Don't you think that there was joy in dungeons, pillories; in martyrdom and sufferings that there was no joy? Don't you think that they who died for their faith at the stake or in torture chambers, that they felt no joy in such dying? And don't you know that our more common heroes who willingly castigate their bodies, lie down alone in coffins, condemn themselves voluntarily to exile and solitude — don't you think that they find passionate pleasure in it? No matter what we do, it can be beautiful and joyful, but it must originate from our will, from our innermost conviction, from the needs of our passions, from our entire self, from our soul.

*Petr (overcome by her eloquence, puts his hand to his brow).— All this I have never known.*

*Maya (leans back against the wall and looks upward to the sky).— See how those clouds travel along! Great, airy, free, joyful. Something carries them along, something unknown, invisible, perhaps the vehement currents of those high spheres, perhaps their own passion for the setting sun, or perhaps only the mood and poetic spirit of this day. How freely and undauntedly they journey on! Without a will of their own and yet so free, unencumbered, unfettered by either earth or heaven. I often feel that I am floating on like those clouds. High up above the earth, illumined, sunkissed. And the earth deep down, deep under me. In that distance the earth looks so friendly, peaceful, dumb. Here on earth there might be happiness, but up above there is joy, there is light — light even long after sunset — and probably death there would be sweet, beautiful. Can you see?*

*Petr (from his depths).— I see. (Silence.)*

*Maya (first to rouse herself).— But I am babbling again. It looks like foolishness, doesn't it?*

*Petr.— Ach, no, Miss. I could listen to you forever and forever. I am so dull, I really ought to answer you somehow — I feel it — but look! It was not given to me.*

*Maya.— Don't be surprised at me, Mr. Petr. After so many years we meet each other and I feel now just as if I were returning from some very distant place — home. See, I very seldom have confessed myself so truly and voluntarily to any one as I have to-day.*

*Petr (still looking at the clouds).— It was beautiful.*

*(Silence.)*

*Kocianova (comes out of the house).— So, Miss, if you please, have something to eat with us. It is just a bite. By the time you could reach Breskovitz you would be pretty hungry. The doctor will wait. He can join us at the table when he comes.*

*Maya.— Mr. Petr and I have been talking the time away.*

*Kocianova.— You must come to see us oftener, since you are in the neighborhood.*

*Maya.— Ah, surely I'll come. But you did not have to go to all this trouble, Mrs. Kocianova.*

*Kocianova.— How you talk, child. Come, come.*

*Maya (on the threshold).— Well, since I must. (Goes in.)*

*Kocianova (goes after her, but returns).— And how about you,*

Petrichek, aren't you coming with the young lady?

*Petr (is gazing at the sky, he does not answer).*

Kocianova.— Well, come, come. What are you looking at so?

*Petr.*— I am looking at those clouds.

## ACT II

*Same Scene. Towards evening.*

*Petr (coming out of the parsonage with DR. VOTAVA).*— So really, doctor, it is nothing serious?

*Votava.*— You get frightened too easily, my friend. By the postal you wrote, I thought, God knows what's happened. Your mother got a bit strained during the harvesting, or probably she ate something that did not quite agree with her. Let her rest nicely for a day or two and she will be all right. Don't bother — at her age every little indisposition looks serious.

*Petr.*— Thank the Lord! But in the afternoon she had a pretty high fever. I was afraid that it might be typhus or something similar. Forgive us, doctor, that we troubled you so.

*Votava.*— Ah, what of that! I am quite used to these sudden messages. But poor Miss Zemanova, she got so frightened. She just came down to take a little walk with my wife, and as soon as she heard about your mother's illness she persisted in coming along with me.

*Petr.*— Good soul.

*Votava.*— Really she is an excellent person. Only last night when we were coming from here did I learn what a fine woman she is. (*Nodding.*) Yes, she is a splendid woman. My wife is very fond of her.

*Petr.*— And maminka — she was so glad that Miss Zemanova came with you.

*Votava.*— Yes, yes, and gladness is often better than all drugs, my friend. (*Looking at his watch.*) Well, as long as it is nothing worse, let maminka chat with the young lady for a while; I will take a ride to Pravovitz yet, and in an hour or so I'll be here again. But don't let your mother do much talking, rather let your guest entertain her. Better if she fell asleep.

*Matoush (comes out of the house).*

*Votava.*— Well, reverend sir, I'll be on my way again. And don't worry. It is nothing serious. Quiet and rest is all that is

needed and she will be all right again. What would you have? She is not a girl any longer, and she is still all hustle and bustle.

*Matoush.*— Well, she feels much better than she did before Miss Preisova came. Has she a fever?

*Votava.*— Hardly any. Thirty-seven six—in the morning it will be normal again.

*Maya (in the doorway).*— If you please, Mr. Petr, have you some fresh water? Maminka would like a drink.

*Petr.*— Immediately, immediately. (*Hurries into the house; both exeunt.*)

*Matoush.*— That will not harm her.

*Votava.*— Ah, let her drink. She ought not to get up to-morrow, though. I will be here to-morrow morning or in the afternoon; I have two patients in Pravovitz and so I shall have to pass here anyhow.

*Matoush.*— Did Petr complain to you, doctor?

*Votava.*— Why, is he also sick?

*Matoush.*— For about two days he has been complaining of headache. Maybe it comes from the heat. But somehow or other he seems changed a little. He is so excitable lately, and he was not so before.

*Votava.*— Ach. That will pass.

*Matoush.*— If it is only not some inner discontent! In a few weeks he will be going about again, and I would dread any difficulties for him in his last year. God be my witness, doctor! Urge him to enter the seminary? On the contrary, I told him to think it over seriously. Even the other day. But the boy, it seemed, was quite reconciled to his fate.

*Votava.*— Well, if it did not explode until now, I don't think it will explode. If he was twenty years old it would perhaps be serious, but as it is—Besides, he was brought up on that. Since his early years he has heard what he was going to be, and your life course undoubtedly was a fit precedent for him, so that he was not likely to strive for anything else. I do not believe in these sudden changes. (*Again looking at his watch.*) But, reverend sir, *hora ruit*. It is already half past seven and I wanted to see some one in Pravovitz.

*Maya (coming out of the parsonage).*

*Votava.*— We have stayed here too long, Miss, and I have to go to Pravovitz yet. It will be dark before we'll get home.

*Maya (jolly).*— Ah, for my part—as long as you will give me a ride!

*Votava.*— Of course I will. But you will have to wait for me. Or would you rather come with me now?

*Maya.*— You will be passing here anyway, will you not?

*Votava.*— Certainly. I never go a different way.

*Maya.*— Then I would rather wait here for you. May I, reverend sir? I like it here so much.

*Matoush.*— Where else would you be going, Miss Maya? You can have supper with us and the doctor will be back by that time.

*Votava (to MAYA).*— And how is your patient getting along?

*Maya.*— She fell asleep. That's why I came out. That window? Ought I not shut it?

*Votava.*— No. Fresh air will not harm her. At night you may shut it. So please have patience, Miss Maya. I'll be back soon. Au revoir. (*Going away.*)

*Matoush (escorts him).*— Well, I am so much obliged to you, doctor. (*Returning.*) You are a good girl, Miss Maya, to come to see us. You have given my sister much pleasure, and me, too.

*Maya.*— I would have come sooner, but I did not want to be forward. It is so beautiful here, so quiet; believe me, I like it here even better than I did years ago. I will be longing for this place in Prague. I am going Saturday, you know.

*Matoush.*— Already?

*Maya.*— Ach, yes, yes,— the holidays are over. Next Monday I will be playing again. It will all start again — and God only knows what will happen in a year. (*After a while.*) Do you know, reverend sir, that I am beginning to envy you?

*Matoush.*— Me?

*Maya.*— Yes, all of you. That is, at least, you and Mrs. Kocianova. I probably feel sorry for Petr.

*Matoush (attentive).*— Did he complain to you?

*Maya.*— Mr. Petr? What an idea! I don't believe he would ever complain to any one even if something should oppress him. He is so self contained. And, anyway, how could he? This is only the second time that I have been here. The other day we did not do much talking and to-day there was no time for it.

*Matoush.*— I was just telling the doctor that he has changed suddenly. (*Pointing to the parsonage.*) He is by his mother?

*Maya.*— Yes. We did not want to talk there because she was falling asleep. And he stayed inside. (*After a while.*) He loves his mother very much, does he not?

*Matoush.*— He does. He is too good a son. If he only were not so taciturn. If he were just a little more energetic.

*Maya.*— He is going to be a priest — what good would energy be to him?

*Matoush.*— And do you think that energy does not befit a priest? That is probably because our calling seems to you nothing else but self denial. But, ach, let me tell you, Miss, that it is just this self denial which requires at times lots of energy. It is just in self denial that we must have a strong will, so that it may safely and surely last throughout our life. Under the external, apparent resignation and self denial, there must be a strong, iron will, there must be an inherent internal strength, enough to control the entire being, to dictate to it.

*Maya.*— To control the whole being. You are right, sir. Even I knew how to act with the entire vehemence of my will power, when necessity called for it. When, many years ago, I wanted to be a teacher, I buried myself in books with great passion, and when my father's death put an end to all my plans, and I was frightened and tired of life, I sought nothing but an asylum, a refuge where I could devote my entire youthful energy to resignation. I told you how at that time I knocked at the portals of the convent. But as soon as I breathed the atmosphere of the theater I gave myself up to it, without hesitation, happy or unhappy, but entirely, just as if nothing else existed in this world. (*Silence.*)

*Matoush.*— You ought to be happy that life took you where you are.

*Maya.*— I think that my life would have blossomed forth even in other surroundings. Because life to me is a magnificent, wholesome joy. But do not think, father, that because of these things I am frivolous. On the contrary,—my conscience usually is even painfully sensitive. But my profession has taught me to understand the manifold features of our daily life. Something beautifully adventurous I inherited from my father. Even in him there was the blood of an adventurer, even though the traditions and conventionality of bourgeois life got the best of him. But I am a bit more of my own making. Ten years of life on the stage gave me much more training than all my former home and school education. I know the art of being happy, the art of intoxicating myself with everything and anything — to-day with a great work of art, to-morrow with a mere memory; to-day with a dead faded flower, which I had put in a book years ago when there was spring and sunshine, to-morrow, probably with some sudden and most sorrowful calamity.

*Matoush.*— How many people would envy you!

*Maya.*— Do you think so? (*Lost in thought.*) At that time when my father lost his life, I was heartbroken, crazily grief stricken. One cannot wonder. My father was everything to me. I arrived in Skalitz as if I were in a trance. I don't know how I ever got to the railway station or into the train, and how I passed those few hours before I reached my father's deathbed. When I got there he was dead. But all of a sudden — I blushed when I caught myself — I was studying my great sorrow, analyzing it. I was, I would say, tracing the psychology of my pain. I wanted to gain from every moment of its duration each one of its pangs. I would almost say that I was glad of my grief, as of something rare and unusual, perhaps in the same way as a doctor has a keen, scientific pleasure from even the most painful case. See, already then, at that time, I felt the actress within me. Not a comedian, who plays for the gaud of costumes or the empty applause of a helter-skelter mob, but an artist able to conceive and produce every and all pathos, passion, and pain of human nature. And so it was when I came to you the other day, reverend sir. Hardly had I been a moment in your vicinity when all the poetry of my childhood echoed in my soul. I wanted to go back, at least in my memories and sentiments, although I did not know whether I would meet with yours. I came to you the other day just like a bird of prey, and when I went away that evening I felt as if I was carrying off a new booty. (*Lighter tone.*) Good God, what a cruel person I am!

*Matoush.*— What a difference in young souls. You and Petr, both of the same age. Are you the real personification of our youth, or is it our Petr, who is so resigned, so willingly humble, so peculiarly indifferent.

*Maya.*— Was it inevitable that he should become a priest?

*Matoush (shrugs his shoulders).*— It was and it was not — hard to say! Perhaps it was not inevitable, even though his mother's wishes were so positive and sworn. Lord! Lord! I often think that all depended upon him. If at that time he had rebelled against our wishes, especially against his mother's. Perhaps it would have been otherwise. Well, His Will be done. (*After a pause.*) Besides, do understand me, Miss Zemanova, I am not pitying Petr just because he will become a priest. I feel sorry for him because he devoted himself to this calling so indifferently, just as if he would have devoted himself to any other calling in a similar way.

(*Plaintively.*) Without enthusiasm, just as if he had never been young. (*He remains silent for a while, and then speaks again with increasing warmth.*) Youth to me appears like a bright, glowing flame which heats up to the utmost all human feelings. A young soul should be such a white glowing matter which is hardly restrained by its surroundings. It ought not to cool off until life itself creates a hard mold for it, into which it pours with vehemence and heat. And it does not matter, later on in life, what the form of this once glowing metal is; whether it is a pagan idol or a consecrated bell, as long as it is inherently pure, intact, and without a blemish. (*Sighs.*) But where is that warm youth of Petr's?

*Maya.*—Perhaps he never was different. Perhaps he was born so.

*Matoush.*—Ach no, no. Don't you remember what a wild fellow and fighter Petr was in his early days and what a timid, bashful little girl you were. What if Petr's life just like his studies were delayed in their course? And what if the hot noon of his life has not yet arrived? (*After a while.*) And it is too late already.

*Maya.*—Really is it too late?

*Matoush.*—How should it not be? What could he begin now, even now, when he is not yet consecrated? He is almost twenty-eight. Should he start a new course of studies? Or should he become a starving substitute teacher in a country school or a petty civil official? And would not that be the same thing? Especially for a poor fighter as he is—without ambition.

*Maya.*—Surely, then, you are worrying yourself for nothing.

*Matoush.*—Well, we are only talking about it. Every one of your words urges me on to new thoughts. Much that I felt indistinctly became clear to me at that moment when again I knew you. It seems to me now that it is a fatal deception, when it is said that we old ones are entitled to obedience and concessions from the younger generations. Not we—but youth is right. Its demands may be but its own and to us entirely new and strange ones. But even if youth is not logical, it has a far greater claim to life than we who are growing older and more superfluous every day. Youth should desire and demand, because it wants for itself and for the future—and we ought to concede. We ought to concede, no matter how holy or important our aims may be, and youth ought to demand; it ought to have a will, even though it is a spiteful one, youth can even be reckless, at least more so than we. (*Plaintively.*) Why was not Petr such?

*Maya* (*decisively*).— Ach well, reverend sir, you yourself said that it is too late. Petr's life is already cooling and forming into a consecrated bell. Let us drop these thoughts. It is not given to Petr to be different, so let us at least wish him perfect peace in his even though joyless life. Perhaps a time will come when even I will envy him.

*Matoush*.— You?

*Maya*.— Perhaps it is a mere reaction — but I do not resist. Perhaps it is frivolous. But grant me that pleasure. In a few days everything will be ended, anyway. And then I will long for this moment,— in my spare time,— and I will say to myself that to-day was a holy moment of my life.

*Matoush*.— Really?

*Maya*.— Yes — and for all that I wish to thank you, reverend sir, most cordially. (*Gives him her hand*.)

*Petr* (*coming out of the house*).

*Matoush*.— How is maminka?

*Petr*.— She is sleeping quietly and her breath is regular. Thank God! I watched her for a long time. The poor thing. I only hope that she will be well to-morrow.

*Maya*.— Of course she will. You will see how happy she will be when she wakes up to-morrow morning.

*Petr*.— Are we not going to supper, uncle? Barushka is getting it ready alone.

*Matoush*.— Let her get it ready before the doctor comes back for Miss Zemanova. (*Looks at his watch*.) Well, there is no hurry. He hardly has reached Pravovitz yet. (*Sincerely*.) See, Miss Maya, one does not know what to choose. There! Take a doctor. Every one thinks a doctor is what not? But what does such a country doctor amount to. Dr. Votava complains quite often, does he not, Petr?

*Petr*.— Of course, a country doctor. But a doctor in a city, in Prague, for instance, there is no comparison. My friend Breicha, do you know him, uncle, from Chernikow, he is already a privat-docent. He graduated from the gymnasium some years before I did, to be sure, but he is no older than I am.

*Matoush* (*somewhat surprised*).— Surely, surely, my dear fellow, but not all the doctors can be privat-docents. Among my schoolmates one is already a bishop, and from my class many have become deans, archdeans, and canons. Well! and I am a parson in Luschitz

and never will become anything greater or more.

*Petr.*— It all depends on luck.

*Matoush.*— And on a number of other things, old chap. (*With a smile.*) Well, Petr, let us hope that more will be allotted to you than a small country parsonage.

*Petr (with a sigh).*— Easily said.

*Maya.*— Oh no, Mr. Petr, one must have a will.

*Petr (carelessly).*— Perhaps.

*Matoush (with certainty).*— Well, let bygones be bygones. Do not lose any sleep over it. Why, Petr, you have never complained before. (*Searchingly.*) And how about your health? Have you still that headache?

*Maya (interested).*— Why, have you headache?

*Petr.*— Yes, it aches and aches. In those worries about minka it stopped a bit, but now it is beginning again.

*Matoush.*— Well, so it is. (*To MAYA.*) In his young days he often complained of headaches, but he has had no trouble now for years. Is it not so?

*Petr (somewhat impatiently).*— Well, I am not complaining. Man was born to suffer.

*Matoush.*— And at the end of ends all suffering will cease. (*Changing the subject.*) Well, Petrichek, take Miss Zemanova into the hall and have your supper before I am back. (*To MAYA.*) I always take a walk before supper. Just through this alley here into the woods. (*Laughing.*) My constitutional. (*Giving her his hand.*) I will not say good by, because I think that I will be back in time. Maybe I will be back in time. Maybe I will meet Dr. Votava and we will come back together. So au revoir, Miss, and you, Petr, send Barushka for some beer for the young lady when your supper is ready. (*Goes out.*)

*Maya.*— Au revoir, reverend sir. (*Silence.*)

*Maya.*— I wonder, Mr. Petr, if you have ever experienced how many a trifling recollection of our childhood returns to our memory, if after years we visit the places where we used to live?

*Petr.*— My life had no extensive changes, Miss. I was born here, here I grew up, and here I return many times every year. Everything here occurs with the same monotonous regularity, year in and year out. Until now I have never been in any other place.

*Maya.*— It is truly remarkable how short the time seems to be when we come to remember some particular trifle after years. For

instance, in the reverend father's room behind the crucifix are those palm leaves from last Palm Sunday, just as they were years ago. I never thought of those palm leaves or that crucifix at all, but as soon as I saw it, I immediately remembered a funny incident, and it seemed to me that it must have happened but recently.

*Petr.*— And what was that, please?

*Maya.*— You will laugh when I tell you. You once told me that these consecrated palm leaves were awfully healthy and that we ought to eat them to keep well. And you started to climb for them right then and there. I was helping you and in our hurry we broke a little box which your uncle had as a keepsake and then we got it,— both of us — I can tell you.

*Petr (with a smile).*— Really?

*Maya (nodding).*— And after we were punished, you said all of a sudden: "Well, only wait, Marenka, wait until I grow up and marry you, then I would not let any one harm you."

*Petr (extremely embarrassed).*— I said that?

*Maya.*— I hope that you are not angry with me for having spoken of it? Tell me, is it possible that it was so long ago?

*Petr (suddenly).*— And Miss Maya, why do you remind me of all these things now?

*Maya (surprised).*— Ach. Forgive me. I never for a moment thought that it would have a different effect upon you than as a mere foolish memory of childhood. Pardon me for that — you are a priest, and to you such recollections, even though ever so innocent, seem sinful and undignified.

*Petr (quickly).*— But, no, no! That would be foolish on my part, if such trifling thought impressed me in that way.

*Maya.*— Still it seems that I should not have spoken about it.

*Petr (quietly).*— You should not have.

*Maya.*— And why?

*Petr.*— Because it hurts me. (*Quickly changing the subject.*) But quite differently than you would think. The life that I have led hitherto hurts me as it never has before.

*Maya (sincerely).*— Life hurts every one, my friend.

*Petr.*— Ach. No, no, Miss Maya, it does not hurt you. To you it has fulfilled itself so richly and beautifully, it gave you even more than you yourself wanted, and to me it did not even give that modest little I longed for.

*Maya.*— You told me yourself the other day that you would

gladly become a priest. Even if only for your mother's sake.

Petr.— Ach. I am not speaking of that. And please don't let us talk about it at all. What good is it? Those few strange wishes and ambitions which I had to renounce when I entered the seminary have long since been regretted. Anyway, they were so modest that they were hardly worth while. Listen to me: My present life, from my earliest years until to-day, that petty, monotonous, down-trodden life has begun to hurt me — that life for which I was brought up and which could not have ended differently than it's ending now.

Maya.— And have you never thought of that before?

Petr.— Never. Not until now.

Maya.— Why? Your uncle did not urge you to enter the seminary!

Petr.— Who told you that?

Maya.— He himself.

Petr.— And why did you talk about it?

Maya.— Well, just so —why are you looking at me in that way? I was asking Father Matoush if you were happy.

Petr.— Happy! Does any one care about that?

Maya.— Perhaps no one. But some people still might. Your mother —

Petr.— Yes, yes, my mother, she verily believes that I am happy.

Maya.— And you said the other day that her belief was sufficient.

Petr.— It was until lately.

Maya.— And your uncle cares about it, also.

Petr.— Yes, yes, it is for their sake that I have become what I am. Anyway, I do not live for any one else in this world.

Maya.— Of course. Besides those two you have no one.

Petr.— So why insist upon thinking about it at all?

Maya.— I understand you. You mean, why should I care to insist upon thinking about it.

Petr (quickly).— Pardon me, Miss, but I did not mean it in that way.

Maya.— I know that you did not mean to offend me. But really, I ought not to disturb you with my sympathy.

Petr.— But no, Miss Maya. I thank you very much for the interest you take in me.

Maya.— Do you believe that it is sincere?

Petr.— I do.

(Quiet. It is growing dark.)

*Maya (after a while).*—Tell me, Mr. Petr, but sincerely, what do you think of me?

*Petr.*— You? How do you mean?

*Maya.*— Do you really still regard me as a friend of childhood days?

*Petr.*— Can I, to-day? We are already so distant from each other.

*Maya.*— Perhaps I am to you. And I can well understand that. It cannot be otherwise. Why, I have changed much more than you did. At least, in appearance. And just because you did not have to absent yourself from your childhood, you are even to-day much nearer to me than you know.

*Petr.*— Really?

*Maya.*— Yes, really. And therefore do not think ill of me because a little while ago I interested myself in your happiness and cared just as much about it as your mother or your uncle.

*Petr.*— Miss —

*Maya.*— Yes, and I am as fond of you to-day as I was in our childhood days. We are mature people — our ways parted long ago and will never meet again. Why should we not talk freely?

*Petr (disturbed).*— And will never meet again.

*Maya.*— But friends we will remain, would we not? Friends we were always and continuously, although we did not see each other for years. And I am grateful to you for the most pleasant memories of my childhood, and now when I leave here, I will be grateful to you for this.

*Petr.*— Grateful to me? And for what?

*Maya.*— Perhaps only for just this moment. Because it is so rich for me, it reflects so beautifully in my soul, in a way which you cannot understand. For many long years I have not known such calmness and rest. And that gives me to-day as much pleasure as the most difficult task. I give myself up to it, I give myself up to it entirely, my friend, and I am glad that I have some one to whom I can tell all these things.

*Petr (suddenly).*— Miss Maya, you don't know how happy you make me by these words. Even though I am suffering so much, you make me happy by these words.

*Maya.*— But, Mr. Petr! Do understand me. I did not mean to disturb you with my sincerity. I did not want my happiness at such a high price. I thought that you would be able to understand

me with the same pleasure as I feel in your house. But now I see that you are beginning to suffer while I am enjoying myself.

*Petr (feverishly).*— Yes, I am suffering, suffering terribly. But it is impossible that it should be different. My suffering was not caused by your present words; I have been suffering ever since that moment when we stood here all alone in the courtyard and you spoke so beautifully and wonderfully about your life. Why deny it? You have brought me resurrection and freedom.

*Maya (with consternation).*— God Almighty! What do you mean, Mr. Petr? For nothing in the world would I want to leave here with the knowledge that I have destroyed the peace of your soul.

*Petr.*— Why, I am but thankful to you for it, but thankful. Let it pain, let it burn; it is, anyway, only for a moment. Like those clouds that are traveling high up there above our heads. You yourself spoke about them.

*Maya (lost in dreams).*— Like the clouds. My clouds.

*Petr.*— And you have followed them all your life, while I only dared modestly to stare at the ground. Always down bent, always humble. While they kept on traveling by day and night. Full of meaning for every one in the world — except for me.

*Maya.*— It is too late, my friend. You would not know how to follow them now. We are different, Petr, both of us. We are something else than we used to be.

*Petr.*— And so you think that I have lost all, that I have been robbed of everything?

*Maya.*— Yes.

*Petr.*— Can you not believe me?

*Maya.*— And what?

*Petr.*— That I am not such as you all think me. That everything has not yet been trodden down within me — that I still live. My life is not yet gone. That it is still possible for me to change, that for me everything in this world can change yet.

*Maya (firmly).*— I don't believe it.

*Petr.*— Shall I prove it?

*Maya (quickly takes his hands).*— No, no, no — You must not, Petr, for God's sake, promise me that you will do nothing so rash.

*Petr (bitterly).*— I thought you did not believe me.

*Maya.*— That is just why, I want you to promise me that. If I could believe in your vital strength; if I believed in impossibilities, I would say to you: "Yes, you are right. Revolt." I would say that

although I would know what havoc I should cause within your inner life. I would say it although I know well that you could not resist my words. But I will not say it, Petr. Because I know that you are deceiving your own self, and that it is too late — too late for everything.

Petr (*feverishly*).— And what if it is not too late?

Maya.— It must be.

Petr (*crushed*).— Must. (*Broken, he sinks down on the bench.*)

(*It is dark now, and the sky is full of stars. From the distant village the tune of a fiddle falls hither softly, quietly, and prolonged.*)

Maya (*moved, goes toward PETR*).— It must be Petr, it must (she puts her hand on his brow). Poor boy, it must be so.

Petr (*takes both her hands*).— Marenka.

Maya (*longingly*).— Marenka. Do you know for how many years no one called me by that name? Ach, Petr, Petr, this is no longer myself —

Petr (*lowly*).— And who is it, then?

Maya.— Some one who died years ago. Ach, Petr, if you but knew. But not even you would believe.

Petr (*softly*).— What?

Maya.— That I am just as strong as I told you, just as vicious. But, look, both of us fell victims to this moment.

Petr (*feverishly*).— Really?

Maya.— Don't speak about it, I beg you, do not say even one word. It would be in vain. But just keep on looking with me at those clouds. At my clouds. Our clouds.

(*Sitting beside him, she lets her head fall on his shoulder. Both stare at the starry skies. From the village the faint, soft music of a fiddle can be heard, slow, prolonged, and sad.*)

Maya (*after a while*).— I would so like to ask you about one thing, Petr. (*Stops and continues after a short pause.*) I would so gladly speak to you about something dear to me and — forlorn. (*Lost in thought for a long time.*)

Petr.— About our childhood.

Maya.— And about something else. About something later. If you have ever loved.

Petr (*just like in a dream*).— I, never —

Maya.— And I but once. Once in all — so loyally and purely, so truly I shall never love again.

Petr.— Never?

*Maya.*— Never. And so much love had died within me — and so much love still lives.

*Petr.*— And does it live for any one at all?

*Maya.*— For no one in this wide, wide world. Still it lives for everything. It burns and burns and will burn out in vain.

*Petr.*— Marenka, must it be so?

(*Their heads have touched each other, he kisses her.*)

*Maya.*— It must, Petr, it must (*rises half way*). Petr, it must be so (*has risen erect*). Petr, promise me.

*Petr.*— What?

*Maya.*— That we will both forget.

*Petr.*— It is not possible.

*Maya.*— And that you will finish your studies.

*Petr.*— And what if not even that is possible?

*Maya.*— You must.

*Petr (still confused).*— And if I cannot?

*Maya (confidently).*— I will compel you.

*Petr (erect, he presses his palms on his brow).*— GOD. GOD.

*Maya.*— Petr, to-day we see each other for the last time.

*Petr (frightened).*— That is not possible. That will not happen!

Do you want to kill me?

*Maya.*— No, my friend, to save you.

*Petr.*— And you — was all this not true?

*Maya (for a moment confused).*— Don't ask, but obey. (Firmly.)

Petr, you must obey! Even I am obeying and perhaps with a greater pain than you. (They look at each other.) (Silence.)

(Suddenly from the open window is weakly heard the voice of PETR's sick mother).— “Petrichek, are you there?”

*Petr (is aroused).*

*Maya.*— Did you hear?

(His mother's voice can be heard again, softly and beggingly).— “Petrichek, can you hear me?”

*Petr (frightened).*— Maminka —

*Maya (with a forced calmness).*— Yes, she is calling you. Let us go to her! (She makes a few steps toward the house.)

*Petr (just as if he had waked up, detains her).*— No, for God's sake, not now. I would not dare to go in, now.

*Maya (meaningly).*— You do not dare even that!

*Petr.*— I would feel so sorry for her.

*Maya.*— See, Petr, see! You are a weakling — only a short

while ago you wanted to rebel against the fates. (*Firmly.*) Let us go over to your mother, Petr.

(*The rumbling of an approaching carriage can be heard in the distance.*)

Petr.— No, no, at least do not let us go there together.

Maya.— You are right. I have no business there. Go there yourself, she only called you.

Petr (*hesitates*).

Maya.— The carriage is coming already. (*Softly and benevolently.*) Go, Petr.

Petr (*goes into the house*).

Maya (*stands alone in the midst of the yard*).

(*The rumbling of the carriage has ceased. The doctor's voice can now be heard.*)

Votava (*entering from the outside with MATOUSH*).— And do you think that my horse would not find its way in the dark? And before we get ready the moon will come out again. But poor Miss Zemanova, she had to wait so long!

Maya (*merrily*).— Really, doctor, I thought that you ran away from me.

Matoush (*surprised*).— And gracious me, Miss, are you here in the dark and all alone? Where is Petr?

Maya.— His mother called him.

Matoush.— And that you are not inside!

Maya.— It is such a beautiful evening. Grant me that pleasure.

Matoush.— And I'll gamble that you have not had supper yet. Is it not so? That is the way it is when the housekeeper is sick.

Petr (*comes out of the house*).

Matoush.— You are a nice, hospitable gentleman, Petr.

Votava.— And how is maminka?

Petr.— She just woke up.

Votava.— Well, and how is she? She does not complain, does she?

Petr.— Not just now.

Maya (*calmly*).— And she will be all right again to-morrow. You will see.

Votava (*goes into the house*).— I will take a look at her before I go.

Matoush.— All right, doctor. I am with you. Look out fo the stoop; it is so dark.

(They go in.)

*Maya (standing near the threshold).*— And I must go in to say good by.

*Petr (detains her).*— Must you?

*Maya.*— Yes, to every one and everything. (*Goes nearer to him.*)

And forgive me, Mr. Petr.

*Petr (feverishly).*— You must come again.

*Maya.*— I cannot.

*Petr (decided).*— Then I will come!

*Maya (commandingly).*— I forbid it! You must not! (*Goes into the house.*)

*Petr (sinks on the bench and breaks out into a loud sobbing).*

(From the distant village the faint music of the fiddle sounds sadly, softly, prolonged. After a while it ceases and a plaintive song from a solitary female voice is heard.)

### ACT III

*Scene as before. Time, early, before sunrise.*

*Kocianova (sitting on the bench under the tree — she looks heart-broken and despairing).*

*Matoush (stands near her. He holds his hat in one hand and with the other he is mopping his brow).*

*Petr (stands before them. He looks downcast).*

*Kocianova (sobbing).*— Petr, Petr, what have you done?

*Matoush.*— Boy, boy, don't you feel sorry for your old mother?

*Petr.*— Maminka, for God's sake, do not cry. Forgive me, but I cannot do otherwise. I have been holding it back, I have tried to keep it from you, and not to reveal it, I have tried to overcome it, but all in vain. For many nights I have not slept, and often I prayed the whole night. But in the morning I decided that I would be only lying to myself and to you if I kept it back and did not tell you the truth. I feel that I could never be happy. And that you would be unhappy also — uncle, for God's sake, please!

*Matoush.*— Poor fellow! I thought it would happen. I thought so. But why did not you speak sooner? Did I not often remind you that you should study your heart and soul, that you should question it before you decided upon your course of life. That time when you graduated from the gymnasium I spoke to you about it,

and even the other day. Then, of course, it was just as late as it is now. But what has happened so all of a sudden?

*Kocianova.*— These last few days, that I was so sick, I prayed to God to give me back my health once more for your sake. So I would at least live long enough to see you a pastor of the Lord and to know that I have not brought you up in vain. Ach! Better had He called me into His fold, rather than to live to witness this.

*Petr (painfully).*— Maminka.

*Matoush (seriously).*— Don't blaspheme, Marianka. What has happened, has happened. It was His will. But you, Petr. Let us talk sensibly. We are grown-up people; you too, Petr, are no longer a child. Tell me, what do you intend to do? If you do not wish to finish your theological studies, well and good. You say that you would only sin against your own conscience if you would sacrifice your outward life to the service of the Lord without your inward will. You could have been a good enough servant even without that inward conviction. But these changes do not happen all of a sudden — still, let us take it for granted. But you are no longer at that age when one can drop one career and start another without many consequences. It is rather late. And you have to be something.

*Petr.*— I am capable of doing everything, only if my conscience is clear.

*Matoush.*— You are capable. Well, maybe you are. But you have considered all these things before you decided — and I hope that you have not forgotten all the circumstances. Do you want to go to the university? Do you want to study medicine? Law?

*Petr.*— Decide upon anything, uncle. I will gladly take up anything, anything, anything.

*Matoush.*— Foolish man. We should again decide for you, to-day when you have matured, when as a man you should be able to take an independent step, even heedlessly.

*Petr.*— And have I not taken such a step?

*Matoush.*— Yes, but how. You want to drop theology. But what would you like to be? Let us say that you'll go to the university. In the first place you ought to consider that a man of your age is not an able student. Then I am an old man and liable to die to-day or to-morrow, and country parsons, you know, do not leave any temporal wealth. How are you going to study?

*Petr.*— I will work, uncle, I will work days and nights. Others

have finished their studies amid poverty and hunger.

*Matoush.*— But do you know how old you would be when you would graduate? Thirty-two or thirty-three. And what would you amount to then? Nothing. How many years would fail to forty before you would be an independent man? Did you consider that?

*Petr.*— It would not be necessary that I should go to the university. I will learn a profession, any profession, even a low and an humble one.

*Matoush.*— And to find a low and an humble profession you had to study until you are twenty-eight. So that afterwards you could clerk, or play the lackey, like an excommunicated priest.

*Kocianova (still crying).*— Petrichek, Petrichek —

*Matoush.*— Let us talk sensibly, Petr. Let us talk like two grown-up men who will not dodge the most painful questions. You'll leave the seminary and go out into the world, the world with all its customs and conventionalities. You will perhaps be desirous of — let us talk uprightly, boy — you will perhaps be desirous of — married life —

*Kocianova (quietly).*— Merciful Jesus!

*Matoush.*— No, sister, such things have to be talked over. (*To Petr.*) Tell me, in how many years would you hope to reach that stage of life, when as an honest man you could build you a homely hearth? Did you think of that?

*Petr (confused and silent).*

*Matoush (again).*— Have you thought of that? (*After a while, with emphasis.*) Petr, I know why you don't answer me.

*Petr (entirely confused).*— But, uncle —

*Matoush (slowly and quietly).*— You see, my boy, this question of mine confused you entirely. And I know why. (*Goes over to him and takes him by the hand.*) Look into my eyes. Look, Petr, without fear. It is not necessary, my dear fellow, that you should cast down your eyes before your old uncle.

*Petr.*— Uncle — (*kisses his hand feverishly*).

*Matoush (to KOCIANOVA).*— Don't cry, sister, don't cry. You will not mend things with tears. (*Goes over to her and embraces her lightly.*) Go, poor woman. Go away from here for a while and leave us here alone. God will grant that we shall come to an understanding. (*Helps her to rise.*) Well, go, go, Marianka.

*Kocianova (gets up, her hands on her breast).*— Petrichek, have

some sense and pity.

*Matoush.*—Crying and sobbing will not better it. Come, leave us here alone. In a while I will have to go to say morning Mass, and I should like to speak to him alone. (*He escorts her away. Returning.*) I did not want to speak about it before your mother. She would not understand. (*Sincerely.*) But I understand you, my boy (*warmly*). Tell me, do I not understand you?

*Petr (with painful gratitude).*—Uncle —

*Matoush (takes him by the hand and draws him toward himself on the bench).*—So, it is true?

*Petr (looks into his eyes and understands).*—It is, uncle, it is. But it would have happened anyway —

*Matoush.*—Anyway, you say? Yes, yes, but so much worse that it has happened now. Because now that question of mine must be answered. (*Seriously.*) How old will you be when you will be able to marry her?

*Petr (is silent).*

*Matoush.*—And how old will she be? You are almost of the same age. Have you thought of that also?

*Petr.*—About that I have not thought at all.

*Matoush.*—See, see, you have not thought of it, and you are ready to throw away your entire life.

*Petr.*—But I feel so strong, so strong —

*Matoush.*—Those are words, my dear boy. You should have felt so before. You should have felt so at the time when I asked you if you felt strong enough to comply with your mother's wishes.

*Petr.*—At that time I did not know anybody — I knew no one except maminka and you.

*Matoush.*—And what if you will never know any one else? And soon neither mother nor myself, and remain here all alone, like a barren rock amidst seas. *Petr,* I do not force you. I will not sorrow, like your mother. I will gladly assist you, but I am old. I beg you, my dear fellow, think it over carefully, lest all these new sacrifices are in vain. There are moments in our lives when we have no right to decide or choose what course we would take. When we must not think of our happiness or our future, but when the errors of our bygone years commandingly point the inevitable way they have formed for us. (*The churchbell begins to toll.*) They are already ringing for early Mass — I'll have to go. And this is the law of life. I would this morning rather minister to the wants

of your heart than to the Lord, and He would strengthen me in this, the greater service. I would rather stay here with you and help you, but see (*slight, bitter smile*) even I have to go now the way my errors point (*goes toward the house*). Come, Petr, come to your mother. Do not go to church with me as you do on other days. It would be sheer hypocrisy. Come to your mother. And if you can, try to cheer her up. (*They both go out.*)

(*The courtyard remains empty for a while, then the rumbling of an approaching carriage can be heard. Shortly after MAYA, in a traveling costume, comes in with DR. VOTAVA.*)

*Maya.*— So then, doctor, I think I will take your advice, though my intention was to go to the station directly, and not to stop here at all. But if you think I can help —

*Votava.*— You can help, Miss Maya. I am an experienced doctor, and I know my patients well. I have diagnosed this case, and my conclusion is, that an operation is necessary.

*Maya.*— But why did you tell not me about this sooner? Why did you wait until the very moment when I am leaving this place?

*Votava.*— You must admit, Miss Zemanova, that the situation here is very peculiar. At first, I asked my wife to speak to you about it, but you know how my wife is — Therefore, I decided that I would take you to the railway very early in the morning so that I would have an opportunity to talk it over with you. If you really care anything about Petr, you must speak to him before you leave here for good.

*Maya.*— Doctor, tell me the whole truth. What did Petr tell you?

*Votava.*— Ah. Nothing more than what I told you on the way. The other night he suddenly appeared at my house and said that he wanted to speak to me. (*Inquisitively.*) Did he not visit you?

*Maya.*— No. We have not seen each other since that Monday night that I was here with you.

*Votava.*— And did he not mention to you that he wants to drop theology?

*Maya (firmly).*— Yes, he mentioned it. And I told him that he should not do it. I told him that very distinctly.

*Votava.*— Really?

*Maya.*— Do you doubt my words?

*Votava.*— No. I believe you. Only you will have to tell him again, and more distinctly.

*Maya.*— And do you think that he will obey me?

*Votava (quietly).*— Yes, because it is for your sake that he wants to leave the seminary.

*Maya (surprised).*— And did he tell you that?

*Votava.*— No, he did not, but I dared to infer it. He only said that he had been struggling a long time, that he does not know in whom to confide at first, that he feels sorry for his mother and uncle. That, therefore, he first came to me for advice.

*Maya.*— And you?

*Votava.*— Ach. Nonsense, mere nonsense. I soon guessed what was what.

*Maya.*— And what if you are hurting me?

*Votava.*— No. I am not. Why? I am not accusing you of anything. You have not done anything, at least, not intentionally. But perhaps unintentionally? (*Looks at her searchingly.*) Don't you think so?

*Maya (firmly).*— Yes, unintentionally. And therefore you are right, doctor. I must not go away now, because I like Petr and I must first destroy the mischief that I have caused. I will take your advice.

*Votava.*— You will do excellently, Miss Zemanova.

*Maya (decided).*— Or I ought rather to say I will obey my own resolution.

*Kocianova (coming out of the house).*

*Votava (has noticed her).*— Well, and here is Mrs. Kocianova. Miss Zemanova has come to say good by to you, Mrs. Kocianova.

*Kocianova (without animation, sadly).*— So you are really going, Miss.

*Maya.*— Yes I am, really.

*Votava.*— You look very worried, Mrs. Kocianova,—is anything the matter?

*Kocianova (bursts into crying).*— Ach. God! Doctor —

(*In the church the bell begins to toll again.*)

*Votava (understands).*— Ach, so — I know now. Well, don't grieve before time. The father is in church, ha? And Mr. Petr also?

*Kocianova.*— No. He is in the hall.

*Votava.*— We will go to see him. In the mean time you can say farewell to Miss Maya. But, hurry. In a little while we will have to be going. (*Goes into the house.*)

*Maya (she is short of words).*— I really thought, Mrs. Kocianova, that I would not be over to see you any more. I am on my way to Prague. But the doctor told me about something on the way.

*Kocianova (without interest).*— About what, Miss?

*Maya.*— About that which Mr. Petr intends to do.

*Kocianova (surprised).*— And so the doctor knows about it?

*Maya.*— Mr. Petr went to him for advice.

*Kocianova (mournfully).*— Before he told his own mother! God, God! What's happening!

*Maya.*— He did not want to make you sad. He first wanted to talk to some one else about it.

*Kocianova.*— God — God!

*Maya (firmly).*— And I am coming to dissuade him. I feel it my sacred duty.

*Kocianova (softly).*— My dear golden Miss.

*Maya.*— Of course I do not know if he will obey me. I dread the thought that he will not. But promise me, Mrs. Kocianova, that even if I am not able to persuade Petr, still that you will forgive me.

*Kocianova.*— And what shall I forgive you?

*Maya.*— I don't know how I ought to tell you, so that you would not misunderstand my words. Listen, when I came to you the other day and heard that Mr. Petr was to become a priest, I felt sorry for him. I did not expect to. And when I learned that it was your doing, I felt angry with you. You will forgive me, won't you?

*Kocianova (confused).*— But, Miss —

*Maya.*— See! I did not consider possible what I feel now.

*Kocianova.*— You know that it would be a great sin?

*Maya (she overcomes her own conviction).*— Yes. It would. And that sin I do not want to have on my conscience. But tell me, tell me the truth. Did it not occur to you that I caused it all?

*Kocianova (surprised).*— Merciful Jesus! Miss! How could I ever think so meanly of you?

*Maya (timidly).*— Really, do you not blame me?

*Kocianova.*— But, God in heavens, Miss! That would be against God, if I should ever for a minute think that you could be so bad.

*Maya.*— So you do not believe that Mr. Petr wanted to do it on account of me?

*Kocianova.*— Great heavens! Could that be possible?

*Maya (firmly).*— It could.

*Kocianova.*— Did he say anything like —

*Maya.*—I know it. He did not say anything, but I know it.

*Kocianova (crushed down).*—Just God!

*Maya.*—And that is why I am going to talk him out of it.

Because it is my fault. Look! I have not your faith, but at this moment I feel that in our souls there must not be even a shade of insincerity if we would do something really pure and great. Before I speak with Petr I must tell you everything. I must confess to you just as you confess your little sins to your priests. In all my life I have fought against hypocrisies and dissimulations, and even now I also feel that I could never be victorious over Petr if I should not tell you the truth. And that is why I am confessing to you with ardent sincerity. It is for my sake that Petr wants to do this. I have caused it, Mrs. Kocianova. Can you forgive me?

*Kocianova.*—But that is not possible. That is not possible.

*Maya (wholly decided).*—It is more than possible. It is the truth. When after so many years I came back to you, I could not understand what a chasm divides us. It was all like a dream to me, like the return of my childhood. I did not want to understand. I only wanted to enjoy the returning memories of my early childhood. It was an exquisite, ardent delight to me that all the feelings of my beautiful days were returning to me here, and I spoke with Petr as sincerely as we did in our childhood days. I did not see that abyss which in the mean time had divided us, but I offered him both my hands across it. Even I felt dizzy for a while. But he is reeling. And if he falls into that abyss it will be my doing.

*Kocianova (crying, sinks on the bench).*

*Maya (after a pause).*—Before I leave here for good I will try to save him. Ach. God. Only a moment ago I thought that I would be able to do it. And what if I shall not be able to? If I am not, you will all be unhappy. And ought it to be, that I should go away from here leaving you to remember me with love, with sincerity, and without bitterness? No, I will not have that, my golden, my dear Mrs. Kocianova. You shall have known it, you shall have known it from me, no matter what will happen. (*Pause.*) If you could know what pain it causes my heart when I see you so downcast! (*Sits down beside her.*) My dear, dear maminka. (*Kisses her.*)

*Kocianova.*—May God forgive you! And may the Lord strengthen you with His blessings! Let us hope that you will suc-

ceed, since you feel so strong.

*Maya (awakening and rising).*— My heart will be bleeding while I talk to Petr. It will be to me as though I were burying my youth for the second time. But I do not fear it. I will be strong. I will be feelingless.

*Kocanova (looks up to her).*

*Maya.*— Feelingless to him and to myself. And to myself mostly. (*Decided.*) Let us go to him.

*Kocanova.*— And do you want to tell him all that before the doctor?

*Maya.*— You are right. I would, perhaps, not be strong enough. Send him to me.

*Kocanova (rising).*— May the Lord strengthen you! (*She goes away slowly into the parsonage.*)

(*Pause.*)

*Maya (erect, decided, goes after her. She stops near the doorway and looks forward, expecting PETR).*

*Petr (after a while appears on the threshold).*

*Maya (all decided, as soon as she sees him).*— Mr. Petr, I have come to say good by to you.

*Petr (Extremely surprised and confused).*— Miss — you here?

*Maya.*— Did not Dr. Votava tell you?

*Petr.*— He did not. I thought he came alone.

*Maya.*— Mr. Petr, I did not mean to come to you any more. For your sake — and — for my sake. But I am coming again and for the last time, because it had to be. Give me your hand.

*Petr (gives her his hand).*— Did I do any harm to you?

*Maya (she smiles slightly and sadly).*— You — to me? (*Shakes her head.*) I — to you. And therefore, first of all, forgive me (*stops, not finishing.*) Yes, forgive me. It is the last cordial and kind word I shall say to you. (*Stops.*) Will you forgive me?

*Petr (confused).*— Yes.

*Maya (pretending calmness).*— Thank you. And now, know why I have come again. I come to tell you, Mr. Petr, that you have sinned awfully against your mother. I will not mention your uncle, although you have also wounded him. But you have inexorably wronged your mother.

*Petr (surprised).*— I?

*Maya.*— You and I, both of us. But I want to be strong again.

I want to rise again and go away from here straight, unburdened, and in silence.

*Petr (embarrassed).*—And I also.

*Maya.*—Never. You will humble yourself and remain.

*Petr.*—I cannot.

*Maya (with emphasis).*—You will humble yourself and remain. You are to-day capable of nothing else but humbleness. If you do not know it to-day you will know it to-morrow, or soon enough. Because you were born for lowliness and resignation — and my path leads another way and to other places. It is giddy — bold — but so narrow that no one can walk alongside of me. I throw down every one who would dare to walk at my side.

*Petr.*—And even me?

*Maya.*—You, first of all.

*Petr.*—Then I will go without you.

*Maya.*—Where to?

*Petr.*—After you.

*Maya.*—You shall not dare it! Before me there are sky-touching peaks, but behind me are chasms and chasms. Behind me there are dead bodies, multitudes of dead bodies of those who, like you, wanted to mate with me. And these who wanted to come with me were stronger than you are. They were free, their feet were not fettered.

*Petr.*—Nor shall my feet be fettered hereafter.

*Maya.*—They are and shall, though you may not know it. Do you suppose that I need to remind you of your mother? I need not. And even if she were not, you cannot follow in my paths. Turn back, you fool.

*Petr (resolutely).*—I don't believe you. You scorn me for the sake of my old mother, out of sympathy for her naïve love, for the sake of her religious promise.

*Maya (with a short, contemptuous smile).*—Ach. You childish simpleton. What would your mother mean to me in such a moment, if I wanted you to come with me? What would all her creed, that is to me a strange creed, be to me? What would I care for her happiness, the happiness of a stranger, if I wanted you at my side? Do you think that you were the first or only one? Know it, then, since you must! I lied to you the other day when I said that I only loved once and purely. It was the impulse of the moment. I said it because the moment, that charming moment, amused me. I was thirsty for

your warm, unpolluted blood, and I grasped your hands and laid my head on your chest like a vampire. But it was only for the moment. I am, poor boy, used to greater whirlwinds of passion, to warmer sensations, and your petty, feverish fantasy hardly was enough for one quiet evening. Mr. Petr, you would be ridiculous if for one such petty moment you would be wrecking your entire future, your entire life.

*Petr (he had been listening to her, with a growing consternation).—Now he breaks out).*— You lie! You lie! Only to get rid of me. [REDACTED]

*Maya (coldly and harshly).*— Yes, I lie, but not for the purpose of getting rid of you. You would not even be able to reach beyond your own petty environment. You would soon sink under the surface without a stir on my part.

*Petr.*— Why did you come back? You would not have come back if the things you say were true!

*Maya.*— Why I came back? Because I pitied you. I pity all weak people and that pity is the only beautiful feature of my tranceful life. I do not feel sorry for strong people — they are my equals — the people of my blood — to such I grant with passion a moment at my side. Perhaps only for this reason that I should add sweetness to their toilsome life, before an early death. And that is why I have come to undeceive you from your delusions. See, even such a Christian mission amuses me at times.

*Petr.*— I don't believe you.

*Maya.*— You cannot believe me. I understand you. In your pious naïveness you have learned to classify people into good and bad only. Into apostles and devils, into saints and sinners. You do not know that human nature is an undivided composite element which contains parts of both — evil and good. That it often does good in order to effect evil and sometimes acts evilly to bring about good. The strength, that yearning strength of my life, has given me a plentitude of different passions and sentiments, but when I was tired of everything, my glory, my art, and my passions, I went out to seek something different, something unusual — the enchantment of primitive memories and recollections, these small dainty flowers that grew alongside of the paths of my childhood, the fairy tales of my once unspotted soul. That is why I was so good when I came here again after so many years, that is why I gloried in that evening. But how long could it have lasted? In its footprints I felt the coming

storm — storm — storm — the element of my life. And to-day it is all over, it is victoriously and freezingly clear.

*Petr (crushed).*— So you refuse me.

*Maya (hardly able to overcome herself).*— Yes. Entirely! Those are the remains of that undivided composite element of human nature — that I am discarding wholly. For that to me is also a victory, and I am always victorious. Bow your head, Petr, and look down, as you ever did, on the ground. As for me — I am going high up after the shining glory — into the airy clouds.

*Petr (sinks down on the bench near the house. His head in his palms).*

*Maya (stands alongside of him, erect, feelingless, majestic, victorious).*

*Petr (after a pause).*— And do you know what you have done?

*Maya.*— I do. You will return to your faith and to your calling.

*Petr (half straightened).*— And what if I do not? What if I perish?

*Maya.*— How?

*Petr.*— Perhaps with my own hand.

*Maya (smiles scornfully).*— You will not kill yourself. You are too weak to do that, just as I would be too strong. Life, my friend, is not a romance or a melodrama where people shoot themselves so easily. Life has a healing power even for those who know but little of its tremendous scope. And you, Petr, you are a tender, flexible little tree — life will bend you, but not break you. There is no need for it. (*Stops a while and then says commandingly*) Rise, Petr!

*Petr (unintentionally rises).*

*Maya.*— And give me your hand. (*She takes his hand*).— From this last pressure of your hand I want to extract some pleasure. I want to leave here victorious. I want to know that I have convinced you.

*Petr.*— Convinced me of what?

*Maya.*— That I do not deserve that you should love me. That I am not worthy of your sacrifice.

*Petr.*— It would be all in vain.

*Maya.*— Yes, it would be all in vain. But your mother is

awaiting you in the hall there,— is that also in vain?

Petr.— You are terrible!

Maya.— I am. Because, look, I do not want to be otherwise.

(After a while.) Well.

Petr (quietly).— You know best what I will have to do.

Maya (with a flash of joy, which she suppresses quickly).— And what will happen?

Petr (overcome).— I will return.

Maya.— Surely?

Petr.— Surely.

Votava (during the last phrases he has been unnoticed standing on the threshold. Now, when both PETR and MAYA are silent for a while, he says, looking at his watch).— Well, Miss Zemanova, we must be going or we shall miss our train.

Maya.— All right, all right, doctor — we will go.

Votava (to PETR).— And how about you, my friend?

Maya.— We are agreed, are we not, Mr. Petr?

Petr (from his depths).— Yes.

Votava (with satisfaction).— Really?

Maya (with the last strength of her bravado).— And you doubted it, doctor? Go, Mr. Petr, go and tell your mother. She surely is waiting.

Petr (suddenly giving her his hand).— Thank you.

Maya (hardly able to overcome herself).— And I thank you also.

Petr (goes into the house).

Maya (sinks on the bench where before PETR was sitting.)

(Pause.)

Votava.— So, really, he will stay?

Maya (with a sigh).— He will.

Votava.— One really should not wonder. He could not have done otherwise.

Maya (looks at him).— And do you know, doctor, that this result was bought with blood?

Votava (calmly).— Ach, well, that'll pass.

Maya (smiling sorrowfully).— And do you know that I paid

for it with my own blood? That I have thrown myself into mud and stepped on myself, that I have been smiting my own face, that I have slandered myself, in order to save him — for his mother?

*Votava (surprised).*— But, Miss —

*Maya.*— And look, I must not even cry. Although I would so much, so much like to cry. But he must not see that it has hurt me. Do you think that his was the greatest sacrifice?

*Vatova (taking her hand).*— I understand you, and I admire you.

*Maya (rises).*— Even that is not necessary, doctor. Am I not a comedian?

*Votava.*— But, say —

*Maya.*— Yes, and this was a desperate comedy — the worst comedy of my life. Now, the curtain has fallen. And we will go.

*Kocianova (coming out of the parsonage).*

*Votava (to KOCIANOVA).*— Well, did I not tell you, Mrs. Kocianova? What unnecessary worries you have again caused yourself.

*Kocianova (hurrying to MAYA).*— Is it possible, Miss? May God Almighty reward you.

*Maya.*— Everything is possible, Mrs. Kocianova, if we have a will.

*Kocianova (looks at her but does not understand).*

*Maya (quickly).*— And those that have no will should not attempt anything. (*Kissing her.*) May God preserve you. Good by. And may you all be as happy as you were heretofore. Give my regards to the reverend father. I will not be able to see him any more.

*Kocianova (crying).*— My dear soul, my golden soul.

*Maya (to VOTAVA).*— Let's be off. (*Wants to go.*)

*Votava.*— And are you not going to say good by to Mr. Petr? (*He calls into the hall.*) Mr. Petr, come here to say good by.

*Petr (comes on the threshold).*

*Maya (gives him her hand).*— Good by, Mr. Petr, and may you be well and happy.

*Votava.*— And say I will come to see you again next year.

*Maya.*— No, no, Mr. Petr — good by for good — forever. (*She goes quickly toward the gate.*)

*Kocianova (escorts her).*

*Votava (giving his hand to PETR).— Well, so good by, comrade, and as I say, you have done excellently. (Goes after them.)*

*(Quiet. DR. VOTAVA, MAYA, and KOCIANOVA are gone. After a while the rumbling of a departing carriage is heard.)*

*Kocanova (returns after a while).— Petrichek, my golden Petrichek. (She hurries to him.) Well, Petrichek, what are you looking at so sadly?*

*Petr (quietly).— I — am — looking — at those — clouds.*

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## “THE PRINCESS HAS HER LOVERS”

BY SARA TEASDALE

The princess has her lovers,  
A score of knights has she,  
And each can sing a madrigal,  
And praise her gracefully.

But Love, who is so bitter,  
Hath put within her heart  
A longing for the scornful knight  
Who, silent, stands apart.

And though the others praise and plead,  
She maketh no reply,  
Yet for a single word from him  
I ween that she would die.

# HAFIZ

*Two Translations*

BY EDNA WORTHLEY UNDERWOOD

## I

MUGHANNINAME

THE BOOK OF THE SINGER

Why tarriest, Singer? Take thy lute and come!  
With royal song call back again the royal one.

Be great thoughts, too, our guests amid the wine,  
And mention of old friends exiled by time.

Bring to our jaded circle joy of June.  
Let *Kul*<sup>1</sup> and *ghasel*<sup>1</sup> blossom to thy tune.

Grief bowed unto the earth, beggared, was I,  
Once more on wings of song oh, let me fly!

Through richest measured magic, Singer, go,  
Grief's curtain lift! The face of beauty show!

So well let inspiration wing thy flight  
That Anahid<sup>2</sup> dances adown the night,

The maiden harpist, to whose witching song  
Old friends unto the Banquet backward throng,

<sup>1</sup>*Ghasel* and *kul* are Persian verse forms. *Ghasel* is a verse of merry meter; *kul* is a somewhat graver form.

<sup>2</sup>Anahid, the star Venus, is the protecting star of singers and musicians. It is fancies to be a beautiful woman playing upon a harp within the sky. Sohre—Venus, the evening star, sometimes called Anahid.

Who lifts entrapt to God the Sufi<sup>3</sup> up  
As surely as from hand to mouth the cup.

Give tones so vibrant, rich, so roundly sweet  
The tangling dust of Time falls from the feet.

Deliverance bring from cares of sordid earth,  
Safe sheltered in my heart bring Peace to birth.

Come, Singer, come! Befriend me as of yore!  
In case the lute fails let the loud drums roar.

'Tis best when in the blood wine works its harm,  
To drown it with the deafening drum's alarm.

Why tarriest, Singer? Red rose time is here,  
When nightingales sing sweetest of the year,

Embowered within the green. Shall I not know  
The joy-song of my blood when lutes breathe low?

Come, Singer, through the ear inspire the soul.  
With fresh songs ever let fresh music roll.

Shatter my heart, my Singer, with thy song!  
Create it greater, cleared of grief and wrong!

O! joy, if thou shouldst show such grace to me,  
Again within my heart youth's fire set free,—

Youth's fire! swift to consume gray Grief and Care,  
And wrinkled Sorrow's household drive from there.

Why tarriest, Singer? On thy strings strike loud.  
Come, banish from my breast this beggar crowd!

<sup>3</sup>Sufi. A meditative mystic. This order have numbered among its members many poets of the East.

A beggar sooner hence myself would go  
When Death calls, than a purple robe to show.<sup>4</sup>

Sweet Singer, swifter strike adown the strings —  
Swifter, I say! A truce to sorrowing!

Or leifer wouldest thou sing an Irak<sup>5</sup> song  
While blinding tears the swollen eyelids throng?

Come, Singer, since my soul confides in thee,  
Upon my truth-pledged word this do for me:

Be shabby Grief's sad camps thy glorious goal;  
With song pray scatter them, with twirled drum's roll!

Spacious with love my heart now shelters thine;  
Inspire the flute with friendship's breath divine;

Drown deep thy woe in wine! Suffice that not,  
Breathe in the flute, by breath e'en life is bought.

Why tarriest, Singer? Come, fresh songs, I say!  
Thy cup is empty? Fill it then straightway,

That we together new born unto joy  
May happy be a space *sans* care's alloy.

And with the others let my own songs meet,  
Tripping beside thy lute they'll seem more sweet.

Let Music make my soul her home to-night!  
Lead on the dance! The cowl I'll fling from sight!

Upward, inspired, from thought to thought I'll soar  
What time wine's guarding the Tongue's Tavern Door!

<sup>4</sup>The Persian color of mourning is blue.

<sup>5</sup>The Irak meter corresponds somewhat to our word elegy, in that it is dedicated to grief.

Grief grasps my heart! The two-stringed lute let ring,  
Nay! Nay! — the three stringed — to the One Great King!

Fresh songs, my singer! And brave let them be!  
I'd have friends hear, exchange their joys with me.

To pleasure them who walk the ways of bliss  
Once more pray, sing of Barbud<sup>6</sup> and Perwis!

I've caught Fate at her knavish tricks again!  
I'll toy with love, forget both life and men!

Upon this gloomy resurrection shore  
Alone the blood of grapes is ours to pour.

I watch amazed the dizzy Heaven spin:  
Who's freed from life to-day? Who'll death begin?

Mere fraud and vanity are things of earth;  
The Night is pregnant: What brings she to birth?

Sure happiness and peace no man's may be.  
Who stands safe on a bridge built unsafely?

The vulture's instinct hath the greedy dust,  
Which Selm<sup>7</sup> and Tur<sup>7</sup> into the darkness thrust.

Beside this road of ruin, desolate and dead,  
Efrasiab<sup>8</sup> a palace proud builded.

<sup>6</sup>Barbud was a singer at the court of the Sassanian King, Choszrew Perwis, who reigned from 590 to 626.

<sup>7</sup>Selm and Tur were the sons of King Feridun, a mythical king of Iran. They slew their elder brother after he had become king. Later, they too were slain by a relative. Firdusi speaks of them in his satire to Sultan Mahmud: "I have sung of adventures with wolves and lions and dragons, of kings with their crowns and helmets of Shah Efrasiab and Tur and Selm——" Feridun has been sung of by Firdusi in the Shah-nameh. Saadi has written of the vizier of Feridun.

<sup>8</sup>Efrasiab was a mighty Prince from Turkestan, and a dangerous enemy of Persia. He was noted for his love of splendor.

Where's his great general gone, pray, Prince Piran?  
And Schideh<sup>1</sup> where, with sword from Turkestan?

And where their fellow soldiers? No one knows —  
Nor over them where reddest blooms the rose.

For struggle, strife, and sorrow Fate made men;  
One fights best with the sword, one with the pen.

<sup>1</sup>Schideh was one of the sons of Efrasiab.

## II

## SAKINAME

THE BOOK OF THE TAVERN KEEPER<sup>1</sup>

Bring on the wine!<sup>2</sup> Light inspiration's fires!  
To genius, to ambition, bring fresh desires!

Once my well-hoarded wealth these virtues rare,  
Until love basely did my soul ensnare.

'Julius Hart, in that part of his essay on Persian Poetry which deals with "The Tavern Keeper," says: "This characterizes the poetic spirit of the Sufi, the mystic, that he never expresses his teachings in abstract words, but wraps them in an embroidered picture gown and expresses everything allegorically, perhaps for the purpose that the orthodox may be deceived as to the size of the chasm that yawns between deistic Mohammedanism and the pantheistic religion of the Sufi. Since all mysticism is the outgrowth of a superabundant imaginative life, it is natural that the oriental mystic should use beautiful symbols of the senses . . . and under the figure of the handsome Tavern Keeper, God is almost always meant. Whether one has always to do with a mystic poem or a realistic song of love and wine cannot be decided with absolute certainty. And it cannot, therefore, be considered strange that Omar and Hafiz should likewise be condemned as freethinkers and scorners of things sacred."

<sup>2</sup>"Drink with thy lips from the cup of consecrated love of the wine of

Bring on the fluid gold which Noah's life boon —  
Such fabled treasure gives as rich Karun!<sup>3</sup>

To him who thus lifts up a prayerful eye  
The Gateways of Desire will open fly.

Bring on the golden fire which in Earth's breast  
Old Zoroaster<sup>4</sup> sought with pious zest.

eternity, for from its intoxication is beloved desire born and heights are found in its depths.”—Rumi.

“Drunken often is God's man without wine.”—Rumi.

“Trunken mussen wir alle sein!

Jugend ist Trunkheit ohne Wein,  
Trinkt sich das Alter wieder zur Jugend,  
So ist es wundervolle Tugend.”

—Goethe.

Hafiz wrote in “the divine, high piping Pahlevi” of Omar. His admirers called him “the tongue of the Unseen.” Hafiz and Anacreon are the two poets whose reading is said to bring madness.

<sup>3</sup>Karun was famous for his wealth. The term corresponds to our word Croesus.

<sup>4</sup>Zoroaster was a prophet and teacher of religion about 900 B.C. Wise Man's Fount: It is related of the prophet Chiser that he journeyed into the land of Darkness, where he found the fountain of life.

“Great Dschem once wrote this upon a stone beside a fountain: Many have rested and refreshed themselves here and then gone on when the light of the fountain failed; I conquered the world by strength and courage, and yet into the grave I can take nothing with me.

Saadi. The Bostan.

“Dschem's Magic Cup.” The Eastern fable has it that once a basket of grapes was brought to King Dschem just as he was starting for the hunt. He ordered the grapes to be placed in a costly jar and kept until his return. The hunt lasted longer than he intended, and when he returned he found in the jar, not grapes, but a rich and fragrant liquid. He wrote the word ‘poison’ upon the jar and set it away. One day one of the beauties of the palace, who desired to end her life because of jilted love, found and drank it. Instead of dying she fell into a deep and pleasureful sleep. When she awoke she remembered her pleasant dream and desired to live. Then wine was made for the first time by the Persians, and named “The Sweet Poison.” King Dschem hastened to try it and so did all his courtiers and his wise men and his scholars, and it became widely celebrated. The king possessed a golden cup upon the bottom of which all the mysteries of earth were revealed. This cup plays an important part in Persian poetry. Goethe's “Konig in Thule” seems almost to be a reminiscence of Deschm and his cup of gold. The fables of the cup are many. It is told of Hafiz that once an old man held out to him a magic cup. He drank of it and became an inspired poet.

When crowned with love and wine why should we care  
Whether we pray to earth or fire or air!

Bring on the wine, the dream, the dear delight!  
Dawn rosy paints the Cup of Dschem<sup>5</sup> the night.

Bring on Dschem's magic Cup, that by its might  
I may explore the secrets of the light.

Dschem's magic Cup bring me! Make haste, I say!  
Whene'er you find it empty, fill it, pray.

This royal word spake great Dschemschid of old:  
"One grain of wheat will all earth's treasure hold."

Bring on the cup, sparkling like Selsebil!<sup>6</sup>  
My pole star be it, topping Heaven's hill.

When flute and cither shed their sweetness down  
The Cup I'd not exchange for King Kei's crown.

Bring on, I say again, the virgin wine,  
Unsmirched of tavern smoke and pure and fine.

Bring joy back to my heart once more though I  
Gather the gossiping world's grudges thereby.

Bring joy's fire back, which once should wild beasts know,  
The mighty forests would be leveled low.

Alone it frees from coil of change and time,  
And for me opens the Tent Door divine.

<sup>5</sup>Dschem or Dschemschid is the somewhat mythical first king of Persia, to whom fable has attributed exploits and heroic deeds. He is a national hero after the manner of King Arthur. He taught the Persians agriculture and the useful arts. Firdusi has sung at length of his wars.

<sup>6</sup>Selsebil, a river of Paradise. It is a frequent term of comparison in Persian poetry:

"Thou whose face is Eden, and whose lips are selsibil.  
Schehab-ed-din-Edib-Sabir.

Rumi speaks of the Fountain Selsebil, which Sweet Youth guides you to the Gates of Paradise."

Bring on the wine! In it the Houris<sup>7</sup> smiled!  
There Heaven keeps their sweet breath undefiled.

Oh, with it I will quench this passion's glow,  
A little while at feet of Peace sit low.

Bring wine, whose rosy light strikes up the sky  
To greet there for me Dschemschid and King Kei!

"Tis then I'll ask when flutes shed sweetness down,  
"When wore Kawusz<sup>8</sup> and when Dschemschid the crown?"

Oh, Life is but a substance made for song!  
With song call back again the kingly throng.

Let each one rule awhile beneath the light,  
Let wine all dim thoughts strengthen, make more bright!

I lorded it full well the Heart's Throne o'er  
'Til Scorn and Sin shut fast on me the door.

Bring wine! Bring wine! Thus dissipate my night!  
Bring softness to my sorrow, to darkness light!

Its glory now upon me's richly shed,  
And now the face of Wisdom's unveiled.

A spirit glorious was I and free.  
As dust amid the dust, who exiled me?

Yet when the crystal cup my hand does hold,  
I see the mirrored joys of earth unfold.

At Gates of Sacrifice I bend the knee,  
And though a beggar a king seem to be.

<sup>7</sup>Houris are the maidens of the Mohammedan Paradise, whose beauty delights the faithful after death.

<sup>8</sup>Kawusz was Shah of Iran in the days of Rustem. Firdusi makes this mention of him in the Shah-nameh where he tells the story of "Sorab and Rustem": "To Kawusz they brought this grievous word: The throne has lost Rustem its defense."

Whenever drunken inspired Hafiz sang,  
From Heaven Sohre's lute in answer rang.

Life is a fickle, frail, inconstant thing;  
Seek then within the cup joy's doubling.

Wine lengthens out alone man's little day,  
And makes real for a space the phantom way.

Enjoy the banquet board, the candle light!  
To none Life keeps the troth that she does plight..

As floating bubbles on a cup of wine,  
Vanished in dust Keikobad's might divine.

To sleep send wisely now the griefs of life,  
And live not as a slave held by heart strife.

Without the soul the body cannot be,  
How heart then without wine-soul, pray tell me?

Again fill full the glass! Fill full, I say!  
I drink to all the kings who lived their day.

Has any, pray, escaped the thirst of Fate,  
Insatiate of blood, livid with hate?

Let anger not for me thy breast inflame,  
Because thou of the dust, of flame I came.

Fill full the glass! From out its finer fire  
Let comfort come forth, courage, and fresh desire..

Incorporate its substance with my soul,  
Since treasures vanish as sea-rivers roll.

Bring wine! To match it rubies do not dare!  
Let pride and grief unto the devil fare.

The rosary and cowl go with them too,  
To both, well pledged for wine, a long adieu.

The treasures of the Vine Child flow most free  
Wherever cloister walls frown heavily.

Should any say to thee, "Beware the sight!"  
I pray thee answer only, "Friend, good night!"

Bring on the wine! I love its rosy flower.  
Let me live grandly for one little hour!

Naught else can free my heart a space from grief,  
And seat me at the rich Life Giver's feast.

Wine! Wine! that nourisheth the souls of men,  
Unto the dying holds Life's mirror up again.

Wine! Wine! My tent I'll pitch upon the air,  
And mingle with the bright star-dwellers there.

Fill full the cup again with rarest wine,  
Thus fill my spirit with one more divine,

That, Tavern Keeper, double-natured, I  
May praise thy wine the worthier thereby.

Come, Saki, let thy glory grace the feast,  
Although divinely natured, 'tis not least.

Lift up the cup! Make haste! Why shouldst thou fear?  
In Heaven 'tis not accounted wrong, as here.

Life's substance, Saki, is thy wine to me.  
Pour on! Pour on! though all should emptied be.

To death the circling days had drawn me near  
Until I found the Wise Man's Fountain here.

Quickly that Fount of Wisdom bring to me!  
On Rustem's war steed Rachsch<sup>9</sup> I'll ride grandly.

And like Tuhemten's<sup>10</sup> hero wield will I  
The sword of Truth 'til Falsehood faint and die.

Bring on the onyx carven crystal cup!  
I love its joyous fire when lifted up.

A plague be on the bowed slaves of the pen!  
But Inspiration, let her call again.

Exterminate with wine's fount flowing fire  
The grief that gnaws the heart out of desire.

Make thine the day! Let that be Duty's thought:  
Who knows whether another'll come or not?

All they who once were Lords of Life and Time,  
And feasted as fond lovers in their prime,

Were forced the tinsel joy-world to forego,  
And now forgotten in their graves lie low.

Who toward the Tent dares lift a haughty eye?  
Who counts on joy when all things else pass by?

Alas! Alas! that youth speeds like the wind!  
Happy alone who keepeth pure his mind.

Saki, bring wine! Beneath its magic power  
I'll own the two worlds for my little hour.

The King with Arab steeds of wealth untold,  
And elephants of war tusked deep with gold.

<sup>9</sup>Raksh or Reksch,—Rustem's famous war steed.

<sup>10</sup>Tuhemten means the strong one, the glorious. It is one of the appellations of the national hero Rustem, who is the Persian Siegfried or Hercules. Perhaps, however, Samson is the best equivalent, since Rustem's strength was the gift of God.

Who stormed the earth in pride and swore to take,  
A banquet is where worms their hunger slake.

From forth the tingling spheres, from Morning's wing,  
From out the mouths of Houris these words ring;

"Break through thine earthly cage, Sweet Singer, Thou,  
Where naught but phantoms are hast lived enow!"

Unto the Heaven wing thy fearless flight,  
To rest and reap reward on clearer height.

Availed it, pray, Great Dschem to rule the world,  
When from his helpless hand the cup was hurled?

To make the wine of life the red grape dies,  
Therefore it needs must make my dead heart rise.

Each brick that yonder roof unto was brought,  
Was some once mighty head, now dust and naught.

With royal blood the clefts of earth are filled,  
And Beauty's dust upon the wind is spilled.

One haughty at the Banquet boasted loud,  
Up-swinging high the cup before the crowd:

"The jest and scorn of Heaven here is seen:  
The great it humbles and exalts the mean."

Darius mortals excelling so far  
The assembled kings of earth less kingly are,

As softly stole away when Death cried — "Come!"  
As if he ne'er had stood beneath the sun.

Away now to thy king! For me say this:  
Who representest Dschemschid well I wis,

Seek well the beggar out, his hunger still,  
Ere yet the Cup of Dschem thou darest fill.

All needlessly the griefs of earth confine  
Since freedom waits for us within the wine!

And now that such a king the power doth own  
As never found an equal on a throne,

Defender of the faith, of peace and right,  
Of kingly Kaianian, star most bright,

Give length of days, give good health to our king!  
Conquest unto his scepter, honor, bring.

So long as wrong and right draw not anigh,  
And Bull and Ram still pasture in the sky,

So long — God grant — may Shah<sup>11</sup> Mansur remain,  
And blessed be the years o'er which he reign,

In wine which ripens in the glowing south  
I drink to him with heart and hand and mouth.

<sup>11</sup>Shah Mansur — Hafiz lived at his court.

# ISADORA DUNCAN, PRIESTESS

BY SHAEMAS O'SHEEL

**T**HE beauty of the human body is a myth; but like every myth it is a truth to those who understand. I mean that while it is a cant phrase among us that there is nothing more beautiful than this our body, we have actually proceeded so far, so long, so relentlessly, urged by those twin vices, at whose feigned opposition the demons laugh, Fashion and Prudery, in the abuse and suppression of the body, the elimination of it, artistically speaking, from our daily lives and thoughts, that its beauty is to us merely a tradition, a rumor of hearsay, not confirmed by our actual experience. We have cast out beauty from the body by a process of distortion and torture, as of old they cast out devils on the rack; and we have driven the body from the realm of our more beautiful and exalted life. We do not now consider with solicitude how it may be made more beautiful, nor how it may be displayed as a factor in the artistic life of the day; fashion supplants the one consideration and prudery has made the other impossible. And if a score of women from some modern city, chosen at random among all classes, were translated first into revelling Arcadians, and then into nymphs of Diana, it is a question whether the scorn of the goddess for their shame and confusion, or the horror of the Greeks at the malformation of many and the awkwardness of all, would be greater.

The beauty of the human body is a myth, and it needs a priestess to point us the truth of it. A great priestess has arisen: Isadora Duncan, who has shown us many and wondrous meanings. May it prove that she is also prophetess, surely foretelling the renaissance of reverence for the body, when, as the medium of a universal and varied art, it shall at once bear witness to a new imaginative era and be the symbol of a pervading joy.

It is this hint that a joy once ours may yet again stir the limbs and fill the hearts of the race, which holds the audiences at Miss Duncan's recitals in a strange and compelling fascination. Peculiar audiences they are, seven eighths women, the beautiful and gentle daughters of the wealthy, and the women moulded to a certain intellectually critical attitude by the college; and a very few men, some artists, who must feel a vicarious shame

for the comparative callousness of their sex, and some of the callous sort, who have evidently been brought unwilling, or but half willing, by women.

But however little attuned to the appeal of the dancer many may come to a recital, none, I think, ever goes forth from her spell without a deep regret for the passing of an experience both softening and exalting; nor without suffering a shock of revulsion from the complexity and ugliness of the life rushing through the streets of to-day. It is perhaps matter for astonishment, certainly for rejoicing and the taking of new hope, that time after time the largest auditoriums in New York city have been filled to their capacities when Miss Duncan has danced, and that this has happened in other American cities also. Of course Europe long since proclaimed her; but one always fears that perhaps the acclaim of Paris and Berlin is the shout of delight in a new sensation, not the sincere tone of reverence; while the voice of London is, of course, a mere unintelligent echo. The eagerness of the most cultured and the most alert classes in this, her native country, to pay tribute is a much more significant thing; and though the reason for this eagerness is one which bears a sad implication, yet it also hides pregnant seeds. I am sure that every convention-bound and polite one of us has felt a tumult of recognition in the presence of a woman who is doing what every polite and convention-bound one of us longs to do; though we have forgotten it, we realize suddenly anew that we do want to dance; to run and skip and toss our arms in moments of joy, and to express our melancholy in slow and swaying rhythms. This solitary figure on the lonely stage suddenly confronts each of us with the secret of a primal desire invincibly inhering in the fibre of each, a secret we had securely hidden beneath our conventional behaviors, and we yearn for a new and liberated order in which we may indeed dance.

But if this interpretation of a universal secret desire, and this intimation of a new Arcadian era, are deeper causes of the vogue of Duncan, the more obvious, the more generally realized attraction, is that of the sensuous beauty of her performances. The stately draperies, the impressive emptiness of the stage, the dim radiance, exquisite, mystical, weird, the splendid feminine body, moving with a perfection of rhythmic motion which visualizes the accompanying music; these blend to an impression of utter beauty intoxicating to souls long thirsty and unfed. That solitary figure, gloriously a woman, voluptuous yet slender and agile and full of youth, barefooted, with draperies fluttering away from strenuous legs and perfect shoulders, and arms 'curving like a precious chaplet from finger to throat,' as Henri Lavedan has phrased it; swaying and running and drifting musically in a little space of gray radiance,—who can forget the vision? Coming from my first experience of it, I met, in the lobby of the Opera House, a young poet of supersensitive genius, who, when I attempted some praise of what we had both witnessed, stopped me with a pained entreaty and a reproof,

which I forgave for the justness of it. For truly silence seems the perfect tribute to such an achievement, and no words can suggest or recall its wonders. An essay to set forth certain subtle meanings is not, however, a violation of this proper reticence, and if I have in the preceding paragraphs discovered little of novel import, let me attempt an indication of what I feel to be the very greatest of all the suggestions of Isadora Duncan's art.

Greater even than the creation of beauty, greater even than the promise of joy and freedom, is the interpretation of life by the instinctive wisdom of genius, which is feeling confirmed by thought, and which understands that the ultimate of our apprehension is a mysticism impossible of interpretation save in symbolic art. Isadora Duncan's dancing is no less than an interpretation of life in symbols. Watching her I have felt that I was watching the Soul of Man moving in the Dance of Destiny. The term 'dance' has a very different and very much more serious significance when used to indicate Miss Duncan's work than it has when standing for even the most talented and delightful of ordinary stage dancing. It connotes not merely something pretty and happy, something to beguile and amuse; it is an expression of the impulse which is a dream of all beauty; it is a questioning, an aspiration, a thrill with hopes and fears, desires and joys and melancholies, and ever with wonder. It is mythology, the embodiment of wonder — and wonder is the attitude of the soul confronted with mystery, beauty, the conflict of the passions of love and hate, and the strange, strange moods of joy and sorrow. This, I feel, is the deepest significance and the highest beauty of the art of Isadora Duncan.

# SHAKESPEARE'S POLITICAL PHILOSOPHY

By L. W. ELDER

**S**INCE there is in the half century preceding Hobbes a paucity of technical philosophical expression, one who is interested in this period must be content to construct a hypothetical edifice of thought from the scattered and untechnical expressions in general literature. For political philosophy Shakespeare's King Richard II offers a field for investigation. As we pass from Shakespeare's early period to such a work as this we notice a radical change in his attitude. He is no longer filled with the phenomenology of the age as the exponent of the exaggerated personal, but is rather the historian of the inner spirit, seeking meaning in that life of which he had been so pre-eminently characteristic. No longer merely carried along by fashionable thought, he becomes prophetic of the skeptical and reflective attitude which history recognizes as an inevitable accompaniment of the renaissance.

The questions of what is real and true; what is universal; what reality and what universality have individuals, we here have translated into the corresponding terms of politics. They may be stated as follows:

What is real and universal in the state? The old dogma of kingship is brought into question. The drama occurs in the warring of the traditions of the king as a universal individual, and the growing consciousness of a real life coextensive with society. Why is it that the king by divine right comes to an unhappy end? There is no answer in the mere record of history, and to the inquiring mind there is a certain sense of defeat. The king proves to be no king: a universal which is but one thing among other things. For this antithesis of a king over against the people as the Many, there appears to be no solution; unless by a complete change of attitude toward the state, we can show why the universal should be identified with the end of society. Though we admit, if it is a fact, that the ideals of society triumph over those of any individual, even a king's, yet we cannot say why it should be so.

What reality have individuals in personal relations with others? If the king is the universal, the only real individual in the state, then all relations among men are abstractions, unless centered in the king. Such

relations as men have to one another are mediated through the king's court — correspondingly an abstraction for the universal which comprehends diversity. The solution of this problem lies in the growing sense of nationality, which will be a real universal giving reality and worth to personal relations in society.

The conservative position, upholding the divine right of kings, is represented by the church in the person of the bishop, and by the old barony in York. The position rests upon the theory of a supernatural power external to the world. The physical world is (equally) arbitrary and lawless; and for that reason this supermundane power must impose itself upon the natural, for it is thus that the eternal order of the universe will be made manifest in the affairs of men. The dogma of the divine right of kings may be regarded as an hypothesis to allay doubts concerning this eternal order. It is an explanation of an institution so old that its origin and history have been forgotten. If, then, the history of this institution is unknown in natural terms, its traditional authority must be explained by reference to another sphere. Hence kingship receives an extra natural explanation. (K. R. II, III, 98, 71, 127, 272, 336, 86, 118.)

The beginnings of doubt and the first conflict of a new consciousness, with the old tradition of kingship, is represented in Gaunt's attitude (I, 508). His skepticism implies that even a king cannot act contrary to natural laws. A king's power lies in being at one with nature, not opposed. So far as kingship is a divine right, just so far is it arbitrary and non-natural. Arbitrary, extra-national kingship, Gaunt implies, has no real power. Even York in his assiduity to profess his reverence for the old authority lets slip a question on the king's justice, implying that though he be king by 'fair sequence and succession,' yet he cannot set aside the institutions which are the outgrowth of social life. (II, 204, 241.) Though the dualism of the natural and the supernatural is maintained, it is implied that political institutions are natural in their origin, and in their development subject to natural laws, without supernatural interference.

A positive expression of the new ideal of kingship is embodied in Bolingbroke, though intimations of the same spirit are found in Richard himself. While the speeches of the latter may be affected there is implied a concession to that new consciousness in the people. It indicates on Richard's part a notion of kingly responsibility, even though that responsibility be but an abstraction in the service of his arbitrary power. It is here that the new sense of kingship connects with the new idea of personal relations based on individual worth. Politics is now regarded as an institution of social wellbeing. Its purpose is not to exalt just one

individual; but every individual, even the king, must react in ordinary relations with others. The king, like other individuals, owes his service to the state. (III, 421-5.) In fact the king, just because the leader of the people, because he embodies and secures their ends, resigns his individuality to see it re-expressed in the life of the whole. The grim-minded gardener gives expression to a vulgar point of view. (III, 513.) He forgets that the leaders in a society embody the ideals which are only incipient in the group as a whole, and the 'top-lofty' ones are needed to shape institutions to new ends. The gardener is even reactionary, since, by confusing the state with the king as the only real individual in the state, he implies a return to the conservative position. (III, 542.)

The status and value of the many, or the question of personal relations, arises out of an inquiry concerning the meaning of feudalism and chivalry. That men have no true and universal relations between themselves, we infer from the fact that a personal grudge has no standing at court. (I, 9.) Any relation to have value must involve the king directly, as e.g., in treason; and any situation which does not involve the king, because by that very fact illegal, is at once construed as casting suspicion on all the parties concerned. Because the relations of men are arbitrary, the situations in which they are placed may be as arbitrarily solved by the sovereign. (I, 400.) This power of the sovereign is reflected in the at least formal moral isolation of men from each other. Bolingbroke's conduct being interpreted as a subversion of recognized good (the established order) entails as a penalty an equally violent procedure for the sake of justice. But this justice, far from being an instrument for the maintenance of recognized good, is only the personal interest of a universal individual. The king talks about 'the unstooping firmness of my upright soul,' but this may be regarded as the abstraction for that justice and pretentious righteousness which must be expected as an element in an absolute monarch. Richard's uprightness is a formal affair, deriving its authority from the same attitude of mind that permits such a king to reign.

The significance of the sentence passed on Bolingbroke, lies, of course, in the fact that he was not morally isolated from his fellows. In being banished, king and people alike suffered. (I, sc. iii.) The conduct of every one is informed by the ideals of the people as a whole. The actor derives his motive from the group which furnishes the opportunity of action. If, then, we pass judgment on one who leads the people we strike at their ideal.

That a man would be willing to stake his life for the righteousness of his conduct is evidence that there was more vitality in the mediæval con-

sciousness of conduct than is usually allowed. (I, 80.) Chivalry brought with it a more intense conviction of man's ability to solve moral situations than we have to-day. But it must be remembered that, in dealing with the waning end of chivalry, as we are in the drama before us, the content of conduct was not real action but honor. (I, 169.) Honor, which may be called the supernatural in conduct, is the pursuit of an abstraction formed by taking the principle for the content of conduct. Chivalry of course reflects the morality of an age which has lost its sense of reality and leaves the world behind in search of signs and wonders. Conduct in such an ages is made up of abstractions which would have reality only in such another world as chivalry vainly tries to habilitate.

The drama shows the inability of these old institutions to maintain their meaning, and the failure of all old methods of solution is due to the advent of new ideals in conduct. Norfolk's speech implies the doctrine that life for man is an existence in a social medium. (I, 547.) True honor is a principle of social relation, not an abstract ideal, but one which depends on a sense of unified life and the inherent value of a man. (II, 40-65.)

# HORACE TO HIS WINE JUG

BY THOMAS EWING, JR

ODES III, 21

Oh twin-fellow born under a Manlius  
Mine own familiar toby whether chatter  
Or brawls or unreasoned attachments  
Or heaviness, pretty trusty, bearing;

Be what the freightage may of the excellent  
Massic the vintage worthy a festival,  
Come down to Corvinus demanding  
Just the variety you can offer.

For truly although steeped in the dialogues  
Plato reported he's not averse to you;  
The story is Cato the ancient  
Found the bottle to revive the conscience.

You weaken if you gently apply the rack  
Even the toughened, out of the wariest  
Drawing the most secret devisings  
When rollicking Bacchus is beside you.

You give renewed hope unto the desperate,  
Upon the poor man horns of might bestowing,  
That neither angered helmet of kings  
Can terrify nor an army frighten.

May Venus if she smile a bit and Bacchus,  
And all the Graces loth to be torn apart,  
With our living lanterns attend you,  
Till the planets are afight of Phœbus.

## BOOK NOTES

**FICTION:** "The Prodigal Pro Tem," by Frederick Orin Bartlett (Small, Maynard, \$1.50). "The Castle Builders," by Charles Clark Munn (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, \$1.50). "The Steering Wheel," by Robert Alexander Mason (Bobbs, Merrill, \$1.50). "The Sheriff of Dyke Hole," by Ridgwell Cullum (George W. Jacobs, \$1.50). "Harmen Pols," by Maarten Maartens (John Lane Company, \$1.35 net). "Bellcroft Priory," by W. Bourne Cooke (John Lane Company, \$1.50). "Everybody's Lonesome," by Clara E. Laughlin (Fleming H. Revell, .75 net). "Sonny's Father," by Ruth McEnery Stuart (The Century Co., \$1.00 net). "Once," by John Mattes (Henry Holt, \$1.20 net). "Ashton-Kirk, Investigator," by John T. McIntyre (Penn Pub. Co., \$1.20 net). "The Social Buccaneer," by Frederic S. Isham (Bobbs, Merrill Co., \$1.50). "The Frontiersman, A Tale of the Yukon," by H. A. Cody (George H. Doran, \$1.20 net).

**BIOGRAPHY:** "Life of Robert Browning, with Notices of His Writings, His Family, and His Friends," by W. Hall Griffin and Harry Christopher Minchin (The Macmillan Co., \$3.50 net).

**POETRY AND DRAMA:** "The Town Down the River," by Edwin Arlington Robinson (Scribner's, \$1.25 net). "Pietro of Siena," by Stephen Phillips (The Macmillan Co., \$1.00 net). "Judith," by Martin Schultze (Henry Holt, \$1.25 net). "The Gold-Gated West," Songs and Poems, by Samuel L. Simpson, edited with introductory preface, by W. T. Burney (J. B. Lippincott). "Pansies and Rosemary," by Eben E. Rexford (J. B. Lippincott, \$1.50 net). "The Little Singer and Other Verses,"

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**ILLUSTRATED HOLIDAY AND TRAVEL:** "A Hoosier Romance," by James Whitcomb Riley, illustrated by John Wolcott Adams (The Century Co., \$1.50 net). "Lovely Woman," pictured by famous American artists (Bobbs-Merrill Co.). "The Whistler Book," monograph on the life and position in the art of Whistler, by Sadakichi Hartmann (L. C. Page & Co.). "The Art of the Munich Galleries," by Florence Jean Ansell and Frank Roy Fraprie (L. C. Page & Co., \$2.00 net). "The Story of Spanish Painting," by Charles H. Coffin (The Century Co., \$1.20 net). "Royal Palaces and Parks of France," by Francis Miltoun (L. C. Page & Co., \$3.00). "The Lands of the Tamed Turk," by Blair Jaekel (L. C. Page & Co., \$2.50). "Bohemia and the Zechs,"

by Will S. Monroe (L. C. Page & Co., \$3.00). "Brazil and Her People of To-day," by Nevin O. Winter (L. C. Page & Co., \$3.00). "Panama and the Canal To-day," by Forbes Lindsay (L. C. Page & Co., \$3.00). "Romantic Days in Old Boston," by Mary Caroline Crawford (Little, Brown & Co., \$2.50).

MISCELLANEOUS: "The Love of Books and Reading," by Oscar Kuhns (Henry Holt & Co.). "The Chauncey Giles Year Book" (J. B. Lippincott). "Faith, Hope, Love," compiled by Grace Browne Strand (A. C. McClurg & Co., .50 net). "Love, Friendship, and Good Cheer," compiled by Grace Browne Strand (A. C. McClurg & Co., .50 net). "A Search after Ultimate Truth," by Aaron Martin Crane (Lothrop, Lee & Shepard, \$1.50 net). "Under the Open Sky being a Year with Nature," by Samuel Christian Schonecker (J. B. Lippincott). "The Original Garden of Eden Discovered, etc.," by J. M. Woolsey (copyright by J. M. Woolsey). "The Cause and Cure of Colds," by William S. Sadler, M.D. (A. C. McClurg & Co., \$1.00 net). "Foster's Auction Bridge up to Date," by R. F. Foster (Frederick A. Stokes Co., \$1.00 net). "World Corporation," by King Camp Gillette (The New England News Co.). "Mothers and Daughters, a Book of Ideals for Girls," by Mrs. Burton Chance (The Century Co., \$1.00). "A Psychic Autobiography," by Amanda T. Jones (Graves Publishing Co.). "The Passover, an Interpretation," by Clifford Howard (R. F. Fenno, \$1.00 net). "Down to the Sea," by Wilfred T. Grenfell (Fleming H. Revell, \$1.00 net). "With Stevenson in Samoa," by H. J. Moors (Small, Maynard & Co., \$3.00).

Mr. Bartlett's "Seventh Noon" we thought an excellent piece of work, but in the "Prodigal Pro Tem" he has surpassed himself with a delicious plot,

whose charming development in comedy elements reveal to us characters that are delightfully human and fascinating. The scene is laid in the Catskill country, and the background of nature and out doors is woven throughout the romance with descriptions of exceptionally fine handling.

"The Steering Wheel" will not enhance the reputation of the author of "Happy Hawkins," a story compounded of love and business, and a "happy ending," neither the shrewd sayings of its characters can redeem a plot full of absurd complications. The story of "Uncle Asa" Webster is told in the "Castle Builders," by Mr. Munn, and since "Uncle Asa" is the very core of New England character, New England virtues illuminate love, family devotion, and business honor in the essentials that furnish the author's plot. Of the same genre in substance, but in vivid contrast in setting is "The Sheriff of Dyke Hole," by Ridgwell Cullum. The "sheriff" full of blunt honesty, a deep fund of humor, and with his many inimitable observations gives color and realism to a double love story, set amid the untamed forces of a Western mining camp. From novels which hold their interest and develop their plots about the portrayal of a unique character to an ingeniously woven tale of mystery as that in "Ashton-Kirk, Investigator," by John T. McIntyre, is a mere transition of one's mental focus upon life. Character is more puzzling than the mystery of much of the recent, of the "Ashton-Kirk" class; the thrill is lost with a satiety of counterplots and effects. Quite worth recommending for all their publishers claim for them are Ruth McEnery Stuart's "Sonny's Father," Clara E. Laughlin's "Everybody's Lonesome," and John Mättes's "Once." To mention Mrs. Stuart's "Sonny" is to recall former happy associations,

and is enough to send one immediately to this new book to hear the delightful and tender chronicle of Sonny's family and of the world in which they live, by "Sonny's father." Miss Laughlin calls her idyl a "true fairy story"; we do not dispute her, for it holds a secret and has enchantment which may transform for us as it did for Mary Alice, this too often gray world in which we live.

Every one who enjoyed and held dear Kenneth Grahame's "Golden Age" will take this work of Mr. Mättes to heart. To say this is a better recommendation than the reviewer's attempt to indicate its delightful quality by epitome or quotation. That there are other and sterner qualities in life and consequently in fiction, a reading of Marrien Marretens's "Harmen Pols" convinces us. The Dutch "Scarlet Letter," it has been described, in which the battle of the spirit is substituted for Hawthorne's battle with carnal sin. It depicts a young Dutch peasant who lost and finally regained his faith in God and man in his efforts to retain, against the long-hidden iniquity involved, his inheritance. The picture of mother and son is full of powerful characterization, and in the story of their struggles the very spirit of Holland is expressed. From the spiritual tragedy of peasant life in Holland to a genuine old-fashioned middle class English love story, shadowed by the atmosphere of ancient influences and mellowed by tradition, in "Bellcroft Priory" one's emotions experience the transition from unrest to tranquility. There is a spell about this English novel, even with its note of melodrama now and then accenting its ineffectual jealousies and fervent sentiments of love. John Clodd and his mistress of Thorncliffe Hall are both drawn with interest and conviction. It is a thoroughly good story. From a

quiet English priory to the Hukon is a far cry, not simply in the distance that separate the two places, but in the temperament and character in human nature each place calls out in man. In the quieter English setting human nature somehow gets diversified, the types are varied; in the Yukon Mr. Cody's "Frontiersman" is like other frontiersmen. The "stirring adventures" are the stirring adventures of all the novelists who set their stories "packed with action" there. A great many readers have cultivated a liking for fiction of this sort, and Mr. Cody's story will please them. The motives in human nature that inspire the "Social Buccaneer," perhaps are not fundamentally more different than those of Mr. Cody's frontiersman. The author's motto, so his publishers inform us, has always been to "get there," and the power and triumph which the "getting there" insures does not very profoundly separate the instincts of men so widely varying in internal aspects as Mr. Cody's and Mr. Isham's heroes.

A new life of Robert Browning is always hailed with respect and expectation. New material illuminating the personality and development of genius is always a welcome guidance to the insight of his admirers upon the subject; but in Browning's case this fact added to a clearer interpretation of rendering more lucid poetry so misunderstandable invests this new biography with importance. This volume prepared with such care and assiduous labor over a period of years by Prof. Hall Griffin, and left unfinished at his death, is completed with sympathy and insight by Mr. Minchin. The authors have woven into a gossipy, interesting narrative the personal details of the poet's life, his family, his friends, his association, with the various places he lived and visited. Into this is worked notices

and studies, expositions and outlines of the poet's work, showing its development and gradual recognition by the public. This is a very readable biography and can be perused as a supplement to all the books written about Browning and his work.

Among these seven books of verse three at least stand out with distinction among the poetry of the year. Mr. Robinson is one of the three or four foremost American poets, while in England Mr. Stephen Phillips holds a like position. "The Town Down the River" is full of that ironic philosophy, that psychologic protraiture in human nature, of which he is master, and of an art full of reticence and haunting harmony. Mr. Phillips's "Pietro of Siena," while not as notable in art and substance as his earlier poetic dramas, bears, however, the stamp of genius which won him the reputation of weaving such cunning dramatic verse for the action of his characters. Mr. Schutze's "Judith" is worthy of a place among Mr. Phillips's best poetic dramas. It is based on the apocryphal story, the principal tragic motive is the irreconcilable conflict between a noble and passionate woman's fanatic and desperate patriotism and her moral nature and personal integrity. The conflict of Judith is further intensified by the presentation of Holofernes as a great man, whose power and wisdom yield to the passion inspired by her force and beauty. The beauty of Mr. Schutze's blank verse admirably clothes this passionate and absorbing substance. Mr. Van Rensselaer's "Poems" is a distinctive volume. A sober but penetrative quality imbues her lines that are shaped with a subtle command of rhythm. In the collected poems, comprising "The Golden-Gated West Songs and Poems," edited by W. T. Burney, Simpson is classed with Burns and Poe. While it

is too much to claim for the deceased poet, it does not, however, prevent us from enjoying verse that has many sterling and compelling qualities. There is much of the same quality of feeling and melody in Mr. Rexford's "Pansies and Rosemary" that we discovered in Mr. Simpson's verse. Sentiments that touch the common heart and appeal to minds unconfused by the symbolism of life and the mysteries. Emily Sargent Lewis continues the same note on a lowlier key, in the Little "Singer and other Verses." The emotion is not so full, though the impulse is not less genuine.

Those interesting series, published by L. C. Page & Co., of books historical and descriptive of the peoples and countries of other lands, have had three new titles added in Blair Jaekel's "The Lands of the Tamed Turk," Will S. Monroe's "Bohemia and the Zechs," and Nevin O. Winter's "Brazil and Her People of To-day." Each of these authors writes with authority upon his subject and adds a fund of reliable information to our limited knowledge of phases of their history and development. Mr. Miltoun has given us many interesting and fascinating books of descriptive travel, but none is so laden with the richness of his observations and knowledge as the "Royal Palaces and Parks of France," so teeming with the long and brilliant associations of French history and great personages. Another addition to the "Art Galleries of Europe" series is a welcome addition in Florence Jean Ansell and Frank Roy Fraprie's "The Art of the Munich Galleries." The authors, in their interpretation of schools and artists, in rendering the beauty and significance of single masterpieces comprehensive to the readers, have achieved a service that is educational as well as pleasurable. Mr. Sadakichi Hartmann writes with

full knowledge and full appreciation about the great painter's life and work, in "The Whistler Book," which contains fifty-seven reproductions of Whistler's most important pictures. The paradox of the man is brought into relation with his art and in the impressionism of the pictures this relationship unravels a personality that is clear in its artistic intentions. Mr. Hartmann's contribution to the interpretation of Whistler as man and artist is a notable one. On the subject of art there is no clearer and more suggested writer than Mr. Coffin. In an admirable volume he showed us "How to Study Pictures," and applying the same concise revealing qualities to the "Story of Spanish Painting," he draws definitely for his readers the historical, biographical, critical, and appreciative aspects of his subject. It contains all that one should know who has not and is likely not to see the original canvases in Spanish cathedrals and galleries. A subject so full of public interest and speculations as the Panama Canal justifies any book that gives an account of the country, its physical features and natural resources, with a thorough history of the canal project from the earliest times. Mr. Forbes Lindsay's comprehensive book fully illustrated from recent photographs, and including five maps, seems the most valuable account yet published on that narrow country, whose constructed canal will have so tremendous influence upon the future commerce of the world.

It is superfluous to recommend a Kate Greenaway book, her name is assured in the affections of childhood; to her "Under the Window," Mr. Baum's "The Emerald City of Oz" may be added as the work of one who too has won a dear hold upon the imagination of the young. "Kiddie Land," by Margaret G. Hays, and "The Magical

Man of Mirth," by Elbridge H. Sabin, though by authors of less repute, are of delightful interest to the child whose interests are compelled by the pictures rather than the text.

Suggestions concerning the ideals and aims of books are always worth heeding when they are made by so efficient and informed a mind as Mr. Kuhns. His "The Love of Books and Reading" is a companion volume one should place on one's shelf beside old Richard Bury. The "Chauncey Giles Year Book" is a sort of latter day "Christian Year," which will bring spiritual guidance and fortitude to many readers. "A Search after Ultimate Truth," by Aaron Martin Crane, elaborates the essential characteristics of man, and the mutual relations of men to each other and to God. It incontestably and triumphantly proves that man is immortal. Two little compilations that will be welcomed by many are "Love, Friendship, and Good Cheer," and "Faith, Hope, and Love," compiled by Grace Browne Strand. Mrs. Burton Chance's "Mother and Daughters, A Book of Ideals for Girls," is one that ought to link closer parent and child during those years when the consciousness of maturity in the girl begins to draw her existence apart from the parent. It is an important text on a vital relationship. The "Psychic Autobiography" of Amanda T. Jones will be, as the late William James suggested, of deep interest to investigators of psychic phenomena. Its human interest will appeal to many readers.

"Under the Open Sky" is a year with nature, its seasons, birds, flowers, hills, and streams. The author's aim, he declares, "is to help people who are feeling in themselves the quietening modern longing for contact with and understanding of Nature in her simpler manifestations."